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THE HEART OF A MAN

Richard Aumerle Maher





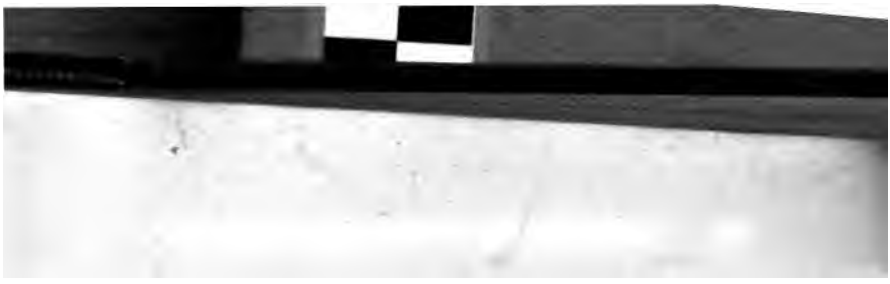




THE HEART OF A MAN







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"That side of the gate went down, and before it had come to the ground Loyd went hurdling through, yelling to the men who leaped after him."—*Page 359.*

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THE HEART OF A MAN

BY

RICHARD AUMERLE MAHER

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TRANSFER FROM C. U. APR 1923



THE HEART OF A MAN

CHAPTER I

THE CROSS ON THE HILL

DEAN DRISCOLL sat quiet and argued ruminatively, partly to himself, partly to the Adirondack foothills that stretched up and away from his house, and somewhat to the young priest who was nervously pacing the veranda.

"No," said the Dean. "Socialism will never bring about any acute crisis in this country. It wants and fights for too many things that nearly everybody wants. The things that nearly everybody wants will come, one by one. Socialism gets a hearing, and a following, because it promises to get these things for people. When these things—the things that nearly all of us look for—better conditions of living, fairer adjustments of the burdens of life, when these come, then Socialism, or the same thing by another name, will have to think of another set of things that most people want. And so it will go on."

"The Income Tax, now," he went on whimsically, "that was Socialism till it was seen that a majority of the voters were for it. Then it be-

came good politics. When it was made the law of the land, then it was statesmanship."

"But the people!" contended Father Huetter. "The individuals, the men, I mean—it draws them away from the Church. The Church *has* to oppose Socialism, and it brings up the old calumny that the Church is always on the side of the strong, established Things that Are. Why, I see the day coming when there will be just two big forces to divide this country—the Catholic Church and Socialism. Their struggle will be to the death."

" 'Tis well," said the old priest quietly, "to have visions while you're young. When you are old you have only the things you have seen and heard to go by. And there's only one vision left worth looking to." He looked out over the hills and into the deep blue of the heaven where his one vision lay. But he came back quickly to the present.

"What did Jim Loyd say about the Bishop's sermon yesterday? I saw him in the crowd at the back of the church. He came just because it was announced that the sermon would be on Socialism. And he heard a plenty. You were on your rounds this morning. Didn't you hear anything from him?"

"Yes. When he was going down the street from the church Eddie Connolly brushed past Jim and asked him what he thought of it—the sermon. He grunted, and answered: 'It's all

right. Us Socialists will have the priests workin' like the rest of us in ten years from now.' "

The Dean laughed. "So that was it!" He turned to the young priest, from whom he loved to draw sparks. "Small wonder you're eloquent on the subject to-day. That was a threat indeed. Now, I'll not live to see—"

Father Huetter smiled. He refused to be drawn out. Then the smile turned to that deep-eyed look of mysticism that goes with the priests of his race. He said slowly:

"There was a Priest who worked. He was a Carpenter."

Father Driscoll bowed his head gravely: and waited.

"But I am not thinking of what Jim Loyd says about the Church," the young priest went back to his argument. "I'm talking about what Socialism does to him as a man, to his character. He was an altar boy of yours here. You buried his father. You helped his mother keep Jim and his brother and sister together. They would have had to be sent to a Home otherwise. He knows you. He is intelligent. He knows the work that you, as a priest, have done here for nearly forty years. Yet, in spite of all that, Socialism takes away his common sense and his religion and he has come to the point where he hates the Church."

"No. I think you are wrong, Father," the Dean said mildly. "Jimmie doesn't hate the

Church. He can't. That's part of the trouble. He loves the Church. So he can't let it alone. It won't let *him* alone. Am I getting tangled up?"

"Well, I don't quite see, Dean."

"Did you ever, then," the Dean began at a new angle, "see a boy, a grown boy, when he's sullen and angry and bitter and doesn't know what to hit? What does he hit? Who gets his bitterest word? His mother. The one he can hurt most —and hurt himself most, too. Why? Who knows? But, 'tis so. Now that's Jim Loyd, though he's a man grown. When his life has turned bitter on him he has to hurt something. We can hurt most where we love most. Boy and man Jimmie Loyd never loved anything as he did—and *does,* I say—love his Church. When the bitterness comes, where he loves he strikes."

"But what is his grievance?" The young priest was back now at the practical, every-day side of the matter. "He makes good wages. He doesn't work any harder than anybody else. He wouldn't be satisfied if he wasn't working."

"That is all true," conceded the Dean. "And do not suppose that Jim Loyd does not see it all. He is, as you say, intelligent. But he is more than that. He has imagination."

The Dean settled back in his chair and made his case:

"Jim is a molder. By his skill and his ability

as a foreman to teach and handle men under him he saves the company hundreds of dollars every month that would be lost in spoiled castings. He is thirty years old. He looks ahead thirty years more. And—God sparing him—what will he be? A stooped old man with a little hack of a cough, hanging on doggedly to the very job he has now. And one day an assistant superintendent fresh from a technical school will walk down from the office to the casting-room of the Milton Machinery Company and while he is dodging a bucket of hot metal he will decide that old Loyd is slowing up—the mill needs younger blood. Jim Loyd sees that before him."

The Dean paused, and Father Huetter sat down silently. He knew that there was more to come.

"As you said," the old priest went on, "he is no worse off than twenty million other men, more or less, in this country. He knows that. But Jim Loyd is different. He is a man of power wherever you put him. Do you realize how he has handled this strike for the last three months? Do you know that he *is* the strike, the soul of it. Without him it would collapse in riot and bloodshed. You know how he has kept your Poles and Italians in line with his own American and Irish kind. It took a big man to do that, and Jim Loyd is a big man. He alone has gathered and handled the money that has kept two thousand families from starvation. He alone has

kept out agitators and murderous interferers from the outside. He is an organizer, a general, a born leader and driver of men.

"You want to know what is his grievance. Here it is. Jim Loyd is a bigger man, a stronger man, a brainier man than the manager of the Milton works. Why should not Jim Loyd be in the place of power and responsibility that his brain demands for him?

"He cannot, because he went into those works when he was twelve years old. He lied his way in because he was a big strong boy. He had no education whatever, you may say has none today; never will have. When he was younger he could exult in his growing body and muscles. He was going to be the strongest and most competent man in the mill. He is that now. Do you see? His life is now, at thirty, all that he can ever make it. The iron begins to turn in him. Do you know what he is saying to himself? He is saying: 'I might as well die now, die now. I can never do anything but this.' Do you see what that means to the big, arrogant, masterful heart of the man?"

"Why," exclaimed Father Huetter, "that man is not a Socialist at all."

"No more than you are. He's the most individualistic man I ever saw. He should have been a poor baron of the Middle Ages."

"Then, why—?"

"Why does he shout the language of it? Be-

cause it is a voice that promises to every boy the one thing that Jim Loyd could not have. Do you think he imagines Socialism can ever do anything for *him* now. He'd laugh in its face if it offered him anything. He wouldn't accept anything in this world that he couldn't take with the power of his own two hands. That's how much of a Socialist he is."

"I guess there's more to—to everything than one thinks in the beginning," said the young priest, hesitating a little. But the Dean made no comment. He went on to his conclusion:

"You are right to say that Socialism will hurt the faith and the practice of many men. But it is not Socialism that ails Jim Loyd. He has just got his head above the horizon of life and he has just begun to learn one terrible fact—that he cannot conquer life. And his heart is sore. Because it is sore, he bruises the hurt by turning on his Church."

"One day," he continued gently, "God, who is good, knows when—Jimmie will learn that there is something bigger even and more terrible than the loss of his ambitions. That will throw him back to his place. Then, no matter what scars it may carry from the lesson, Jim Loyd's soul will be the soul of a great man."

He reached for his breviary, and Father Huetter, rising, went thoughtfully about his work. The general relaxation and carelessness brought on in the town by so many people being idle, to-

gether with the fact that many were eating poorer food than they were accustomed to, had caused almost an epidemic of typhoid. And typhoid is a call that does not wait till the morning. The priest goes on the instant. Father Huetter had had just one undisturbed night in two weeks, and besides, at twenty-eight a man does not like to have his pet and seated convictions set aside with a word. It almost makes him blame his university.

His way took him down the main business street of the town. The strikers had hired a vacant store on this street and around the front of it a crowd was always gathered. It was really just a place for Jim Loyd to sit all day and a good part of the night listening to complaints and threats and evidences of starvation. And Loyd, as judge and guardian of the relief funds, which he himself gathered with mighty labor, had seen pretty nearly all that is to be learned of human cupidity and selfishness. They came to him knowing that every pound of flour, every pair of shoes they might get, was simply being taken from someone else who would need it perhaps worse than they. Yet they came and lied and fawned and tried to get things just for the sake of getting them, just because something was being given away.

Jim Loyd wanted money, wanted it passionately as he wanted all the things of life that represent power. But no money could have hired

him to do the work that he was doing. It was thankless. Every one had to go away somewhat disappointed. And there was real suffering, a great deal of it, that he could not relieve. Yet he could not leave even the details of the work to another. The women and the weak ones trusted no one else. And the strong would have bullied another. So he sat there day after day with the cheery, large manner of courage for all, while into his heart his own bitterness ate and ate.

He had just finished frightening the wits out of a landlord who had threatened to turn three of the poorest families into the street if their rent was not paid, when one of the officers of the union came to his desk with the report that John Sargent himself was coming to Milton to take direct charge of the strike situation.

John Sargent was a man who sat high up in the general office building in New York and kept his hand—a thin cold hand of wire—upon every act of the Milton Machinery Company from the time the iron was bought underground until the last distant selling-agent had made his returns from Russia and South America. He was not a manufacturer. You could buy manufacturers, he said. Just as you could buy machines, so you could buy other machines to run them. You could buy men, you could buy ideas, you could buy patents—or steal them. You could buy anything, in fact, except the spark of life—the genius and the driving power to make your or-

ganization live. That you had to give from yourself. He was a creator, you see.

He was really a banker whose business it was to show credit and with that credit to acquire vast sums of money, ready, hard, unanswerable money with which to buy bodies, brains, and machines, that they might produce more credit, that he might acquire vaster sums of money, to buy more—. And so on, around the circle again. He was as much the squirrel in the wheel as was the meanest of his machines, but he refused to know it.

The strike at Milton had stopped his wheel for three months. He knew that in every jam of machinery there is sure to be just one pin or one piece that is causing the whole trouble. Lesser men waste time taking the machine apart and testing out each piece. The genius goes straight to that one pin, removes it, and—click!—the thing goes again. John Sargent knew that the man in Milton who could keep four jealous races of people, near the starvation point, in an orderly, law-abiding strike for three months was the pin in the jam. He knew that that man was Jim Loyd. He was coming to Milton to remove that pin.

Jim Loyd had long ago looked over the heads of the superintendents and the manager of the works and had seen that the strike would one day come to a grapple between himself and John Sargent. And he had exulted in the thought of

it. Personally, he might say, he had nothing to lose. He had nothing that John Sargent could take away from him. And while he realized Sargent's power to make people suffer—he could see it all about him—he also knew that John Sargent was suffering too, in the only way he could be made suffer. He was losing money. He could not lose much more. Therefore, when he was coming now to take personal charge it meant that he was ready to do naked battle. Loyd went over the things that Sargent might do. He wanted to know what kind of battle it would be.

But John Sargent had not merely marked the pin for removal. He had prepared the tools for the work. The night before in New York he had written a telegram to George Atwater, manager of the works at Milton. When Atwater had cleared up the cipher and read the message twice, he tore it up slowly into very little bits and dropped them into the fan of the air-shaft.

"I wonder," he said bitterly to himself, "if Sargent thinks he pays me for work as low—and as dangerous—as that."

The telegram read:

"Spread report quietly Loyd dealing with Sargent to sell out strikers. Mention twenty thousand."

But Atwater had no notion of disregarding John Sargent's orders. Few people ever did. Before midnight of that night the report was the topic of raging discussion in four languages.

Naturally Jim Loyd did not hear it. But all day he had known that there was something in the atmosphere, something in the way people had met him, that was not clear. When the report came to him that Sargent was arriving in town, he thought that it was a premonition of coming battle that had made him feel strange. About six o'clock there came a break in the stream of those crowding in on him for help and for orders and with reports. He sent out to a lunch cart across the street for a couple of sandwiches—his supper—and prepared for the evening's work.

While he waited, the telephone rang, and in the little action of lifting the receiver to his ear he found to his surprise that he was tired, dead tired. This was no way to be prepared for John Sargent's move, whatever it might be.

Father Driscoll's voice over the wire surprised him still more:

"Is that you, Jimmie?" it questioned.

The boyhood name—nobody used it to him now—brought back the old habit of reverence.

"Yes, Dean. What can I do?" He replied before he remembered that—

"Have you had a call," questioned the Dean, "to meet Mr. Sargent yet?"

"No."

"You will, then, I think. And, Jimmie—" the old priest's voice held a moment on the name.

"Yes? What is it, Dean?"

"Jimmie, take what I say the way it's given: Don't go alone."

"I see nothing to fear."

"I know that, Jimmie. Call it an old man's whim, then. Jimmie. I've lived longer than you have. Take advice. Do not go alone." The Dean hung up his receiver, leaving Loyd sitting in brown thought with a part of the desk instrument in either hand.

The report which all the town, except Loyd, had heard had just come to the Dean. Almost as clearly as if he had read the deciphered telegram, the old priest understood the plan. Sargent did not hope to buy Jim Loyd, though he might try it. But with the report once spread, some would believe it, others would waver, and the moment Loyd found that he was not absolutely trusted he would surely make some grave mistake; perhaps he would throw up his work with the strike altogether. They were counting on his temper and recklessness when angered.

Loyd put back the 'phone and choked down a part of one of the sandwiches. He was hungry, but he could not eat. There was something wrong, very wrong, with him. Why had not Father Driscoll said more—or nothing. Three years before this time, he remembered, the priest would have walked down the street to him and told him, eye to eye, *all* that he meant. But Jim

Loyd did not deceive himself. He knew that it was not the priest who had changed in those three years.

At eight o'clock that evening a clerk left the offices of the Milton Company ostentatiously carrying a letter in his hand. He was on no errand of haste or secrecy. He walked leisurely where the lights were brightest and the crowds thickest. A whisper ran ahead of him, circled around him as he went, and behind him, swelled into a certainty. He was carrying a message from Sargent to Jim Loyd. The crowd did not reason. A crowd never does. There was a fact. They had seen.

Jim Loyd took the message, read it, reached for his hat, and started out into the street. Like every man who has power over men, he was always sensitive to the attitude or the feeling of a crowd toward him. As he walked through the crowds in the street he was absorbed in his own thoughts of the battle before him. He spoke to no one; looked at no one. But he could not escape the feeling that there were distrust and hostility all about him. It crowded him. Twice he half stopped and shook his big shoulders, to throw it off. But it followed him, annoying him, right up to the gate of the works.

A guard admitted him at the officers' entrance and led him up through the several offices to the room always reserved for the rare visits of John Sargent to Milton.

The two men studied each other swiftly as they shook hands. Each saw in the other a certain driving ruthlessness to get results. They were brothers for the moment, under all the differences of education and training. John Sargent used none of the preliminaries of thunder or condescension which he used so effectively with smaller men.

"You, Loyd," he said brusquely, "are head and brains of this strike."

"What next?" admitted Loyd impatiently.

"This strike is for the reinstatement of two men whom my manager discharged."

"It's for the principle that you can't and won't discharge any man without cause," Loyd corrected bluntly.

"Principles are capsules of words for weak people. You are not a demagogue. Why talk like one? Will *you* ever be discharged without cause?"

"No. I save you too much."

"What, then, have you, personally, to gain or lose by this strike?"

"Nothing," said Loyd shortly.

"Then listen. You are not a labor leader. You despise the work and the ingratitude that you know is the only reward. You have nothing ahead of you in the works. You never got the training, and you never will, now. You'll work there till you die of slow consumption. Yet if you had a business of your own, or the money



to make one, you could go as far as you liked. And that would be very far, young man, very far."

The small, hard-eyed man laid one arm along the desk, and with all the air of one giving final advice said:

"You have brains, you have drive; add to them the money that I am going to give you and—sit down!" he snapped.

Loyd had sprung from his chair and lunged toward him.

"Do you think I came here with only one argument?" Sargent questioned coolly.

"One's enough," growled Loyd, "if you don't want—"

"You need not threaten. We are both men. Sit down!" he repeated. But Loyd turned to pace the floor.

"See here," Sargent began again. "You are thinking that you are bound to these people, that you have led them into this strike and that they trust you, that you would be selling them out. Now let's look at the facts. How long would this strike have lasted but for you. But for you those people would have rioted and destroyed property; the militia would have been called out; the workers would have become frightened, and the strike would have gone to pieces. They would have been back at work in a month. That's one thing you're thinking, that you owe them loyalty. And you're wrong. They haven't

any strike. The strike is yours, body and soul—to buy or sell with.

"Again: *Do they trust you?*"

Loyd turned as if struck.

"When you were walking up through the crowds on the street to-night do you know what every man, and woman, of them was saying? Do you know the word that is in everybody's mouth in this town to-night? *I* do. I put it there. The word is this: Jim Loyd has been offered twenty thousand dollars to betray the strike. Will he take it? They do not know, you see, whether you will or not. That's how much they trust you."

Jim Loyd staggered to a chair. The revolting confession which he had just heard from the man did not interest him. He was struck too deeply for anger or disgust. Sargent was right—whatever means he had used—the people did not trust Jim Loyd under temptation. They never trusted anyone. For this he had slaved through these months, keeping them from riot and bloodshed and starvation! Now a word from this man who was their known enemy was enough to turn them against the man who had done all for them. He remembered the feeling of distrust and anger that he had sensed from the crowds in the street. Sargent was right.

"You think you see it all," the other man went on levelly, "and you are mad. But you don't see the half of it. This strike of yours is lost

now. You may be able to hold your organization together for another month. But you cannot keep them from rioting and destruction. They don't trust you, you see. That will give me a chance to get the militia here, and that will be the end. But in the meantime my insurance is canceled—you see I am putting myself into your hands—and they may destroy hundreds of thousands of dollars on me before they are stopped. Now, as a measure of insurance, of protection, I am asking you to call this strike off to-morrow. If you are the man you think you are," he challenged, "and you say you can do it, there are in that safe fifty thousand dollars in *yellow-backed money* for you to take away with you this minute. You see, *I* trust you."

Jim Loyd sat in a daze. His brain whirled in a blaze of flaring emotions. Anger and desperation against those he had fed and who looked at him with eyes of suspicion; a great hungry lust to kill this man who had ruined him with his fellows and who now offered to buy the wreck; and *fifty thousand dollars!* With fifty thousand dollars to start on Jim Loyd could drive the world ahead of him!

He struggled to his feet, tugging at his collar for air. He tore both collar and tie from his throat and stood there bare-necked, panting.

God knows what he was going to do.

In through the window, full-toned, certain, deep, as a voice from either end of time, came the

tolling of the curfew bell from the Catholic church. For forty years Father Driscoll had struck that bell himself.

Jim Loyd stiffened where he stood. That bell had stopped him in many a boyish mischief—the tone and the thought of the man who struck it. Now, when passion and despair had pushed him back to elementary things, the tone smote him full in the face. He rushed blindly from the room and out into the night.

He crossed the street and the end of the town and struck straight away into the hills. He did not know, or care where he went—only to go, on and on. But when the mad impulse of flight was spent, he turned, to face the thing that pursued him. Standing on the brow of the hill he looked back down upon it. There it lay in the sharp, white moonlight, an evil, black thing that crawled and crawled along the river. A thing of the slime, it looked—the mill, as it lay there stretching out its long, low, black buildings like feelers, that drew in the lives of men and women. Its black stacks were like the horns of some half-formed river beast, peering with blind eyes into the sky.

All the hate of a lifetime, all the raging passions of this night rolled themselves into one ball of fury in the man's heart, and he raved at the thing there below him. It had taken his father; it had taken his mother as she scrubbed its offices for unclean men to sit in; it had taken the youth

of his own life, and it would take the rest. It had made him a machine, a thing measured in buckets and castings. And to-night it had offered to take his soul and his manhood. And that was not the worst. The worst, the terrible thing was that he had—he had *listened!* He might have done it.

When that thing down there, that crawling thing, could do that to him, to Jim Loyd whom all men—! No!—Men did not trust him, how could they!

There was one thing left, only one—but it was enough. The rage in his heart and his eyes turned itself down till it burned with the blue-steel flame of mad, but deliberate, purpose. He looked across the mill-pond and up the river to the top of the highest of the hills. There on the very crest, nestling among the roots of a scrub white birch-tree, there was something that would square it all.

He could show them still that he was Jim Loyd, a big man, bigger than their suspicions, bigger than fifty thousand dollars, bigger than that slimy black thing down there that took their lives. He could show them that he was big enough to destroy that thing, and himself with it.

He skirted the town till he came down to the river at a point almost opposite the high hill. Here, under the alders, old Peter Choyniski kept a boat hidden. Loyd picked the padlock that

held the two oars, and pulled silently to the other shore.

On the top of the hill, on his knees, he dug swiftly with his fingers at the roots of the white birch. He dared not use even his knife to help.

Out of the mold he drew a roll of stuff wrapped in black oilcloth. The roll was of soft, fluffy cotton and in it lay embedded six slender, innocent-looking tubes of yellow liquid, and seven black sticks. There was enough of the terrible explosive to destroy practically the whole mill, yet Jim Loyd's hand was steady and almost careless as he picked them out of the cotton and slid them into his breast-pockets. He was playing with Death, and he would not be cheated in the game.

Under the cotton lay a coil of very fine wire, several hundred feet. In the center of the coil was a little black affair hardly larger than a wrist watch. It was not a watch: it was a tiny, powerful sparker, modeled after the latest type of self-starter for automobiles. One turn of the lock in its back gave a spark at any number of places along the wire. In the top of each tube was fitted a little copper plug with a cap beneath to explode the tube. It was a very simple and very sure contrivance. But this was no time-clock, that the one who set it might be miles away before the explosion. No, the man who did this must stand—and go—with his work.

It had been brought into the town by a band

of murderous anarchists who, in the much-abused name of Labor, had tried to take charge of the strike in the beginning. Jim Loyd had taken the thing from them and had drummed them out of the town. Why he had saved and hidden it here he had never been able to tell. He would have tried to kill with his hands any man who had attempted to use it.

Now he stuffed the sparker and coil into another pocket and rose from his knees. He was going to do this thing deliberately and surely. No man would stop him. And he would go with his work.

He faced down across the placid mill-pond and the mill below, dour and black, and over the village now peacefully going to its sleep under the beautiful moon. There was peace—peace and the brooding of God's spirit over all—and he was going to—

At the farthest side of the village, lying up the slope of the rising hill, clear-marked like a cameo in the ivory light, was the Church. He had never noticed it from this angle. It was a perfect cruciform, and as he looked down upon it from this height and distance it looked like a mighty cross marked upon a giant grave. It seemed to dominate and to group the whole town around itself until it gave life to all about it. It was the *soul* of the picture. He stood there gazing hungrily, but blindly.

Then something dropped from him. His soul

came forth to his eyes, to look. And seeing, it saw not the walls of the church nor the cross, but saw through and through, and saw the God of the Altar there in the Church eternal. And space was gone and all things between. So for one terrible instant Jim Loyd's soul stood naked and unshielded before God.

Mechanically he started down the hill. In the middle of the mill-pond he drew out the seven slender tubes and dropped them gently, one by one, into the water.

Father Driscoll sat late at night always with his books. When old eyes tired with the strain, and sleep still did not come, he would rise and steal out quietly—he knew where was every board that creaked—through the back hall and the sacristy to the church. He would make vigil a while with the faithful little lamp before the tabernacle and then he would walk down to the door of the church and open it for a breath of air. He loved to look down on the village at this hour of peace and to breathe his little prayer for all sinning and suffering ones in it.

To-night as he stepped out of the door, there on the wide top step of the church a man crouched, crying bitterly. He wept not as a woman weeps, nor as an angered man whines in rage or fear, but as a big, hurt boy cries—with long, wracking sobs. The old priest came over and, putting his hand to the man's shoulder, recognized him.

It was James Loyd.

As he felt the touch of the priest's hand the man rose and faced him. But he did not attempt to speak.

Father Driscoll stood a moment looking into the face of the boy whom he had always loved. Then he said, with finality:

"Jimmie, I do not know what they put you through to-night. I do not wish to, save that you have come through it and are here. But I do know that if ever a man had need of the help of God, then you will be that man, that you may do the work that will be for your hands here in this town for the months to come.

"Come in to ask it now."

And together they passed into the church to talk to God in the hour of midnight.

CHAPTER II

"THEY HAVE NOTHING TO EAT"

"You were wrong, Dean," Father Lynch announced flatly. "The question is all one of political economy, anyway. You might better leave it alone. The Church is not called to settle it." He was fifteen years younger than the Dean, and, privately, believed him the wisest man in the world. But they had been neighboring pastors for twenty-five years; this gave certain privileges.

"Everything is political economy, if you come to that," said Father Huetter, taking up the defense for Dean Driscoll, who seemed to be thinking of something else. "It is a question of political economy when a man has not five cents to buy a loaf of bread. Also, it is political economy to ask why the loaf costs eight cents when the man has only five."

"You say," the young German priest went on, laying down his argument with finger on palm, "the Church has not to answer these questions: the law of mine and *thine* settles them. But, does it? The law of hunger is stronger yet. Suppose the man obeys the law of hunger and

takes the bread where he finds it. Then both Church and State are interested. Each has a question to answer. Are we forever to be tinkering with remedies and mendings? Are we never to root at causes?"

"You are thinking in small circles," returned Father Lynch. "You are cooped up in your village here—you call it a city—where the people are too crowded around you. You hear too much of uplift and brotherhood and man's duty to man. You imagine from it all that one man is interested in another man; how the other lives, what he does. He is not.

"Come up into the hills with me," Father Lynch waved a cherished pipe expansively to the blue foothills of the Adirondacks, "and see how big the world is. From Felton Top I can see miles across the valley to the slope of Marcy. There is a man there who plows a big tract of the slope every spring. When he has been delving three days, at the biggest work he does in the whole year, I can see what he has done. He has made a little black square, the size of your hand, in the green of the slope. Now every man in the world is as interested in every other man as I am in that man, or he in me. I watch him because, after he has broken his heart at it for three days, he makes a dot on my view. He does not know that I exist."

"But that is extreme," Father Huetter contended.

"Is it? How many people are there in the world?"

"In figures? Oh, a billion and a half, I suppose, or more."

"You are right. The figures mean nothing. But we'll agree that there's a lot of people, anyway. Now barring exceptions, like the Dean here who—and it's time for him—is thinking of heaven, and you who are worrying about Socialism, what is practically every mother's son of all these men in the world thinking about?"

"He is thinking," Father Lynch answered himself, "of what he can get, and how he can keep what he has. And you are surprised that an individual, here and there, has not the price of a loaf, when all the world has been conspiring from the beginning to keep it from him, or to take it from him if he has it. No church, no power on earth can regulate the impelling selfishness of men. The world is too big, besides. And the currents of supply and demand, of want and plenty, flow about it like the magnetic waves. You can never hold them. You cannot set the price of labor or of bread, for men will give what they have to and take whatever they can get for each."

"The Church did just that for seven hundred years," Father Huetter contended warmly. "And the world was, relatively, a far bigger place than it is now. She laid the foundations of modern Europe on just her ability to curb

the rapacity of the strong and to enforce equity between great and small."

"She did. But who knows about it now? Is it not a fact that most modern history blames her for the very abuses which she alone could and did curb?"

"But that is the common lot of every great force for good."

"Just what I'm telling the Dean, here. Whether he spoke for or against Socialism he is bound to be put in the wrong."

"I said nothing of Socialism. I spoke to my people the gospel of Jesus Christ as it is written for me," the Dean put in quietly. "I was not thinking of Socialism. I was thinking that to-day is Labor Day and to-morrow the schools open. Some of the boys and girls have shoes, because they have gone barefoot all summer saving them for school. But more have none."

He turned to the hills. "Do you see that blue line across the waist of Orrin Mountain? You have not been twenty-five years in these hills without knowing what that means?"

"It means," answered Father Lynch, "that there'll be frost very soon."

"I was thinking of that, not of Socialism," the Dean went on. "I was thinking of the haggard, desperate faces of the men before me. For three months they have been hoping for a peaceful settlement of this strike. Now, when they have lost faith in Jimmie Loyd—the only real leader they

had—they see no hope. I was thinking of the gray faces of the mothers that have grown five years older in these three months. They are starving—starving, mind you—on warmed-over tea and the scraps that the children leave. And I was thinking of the long lines of young men and boys in the back of the church. I know their faces every one, and I have seen them growing harder and rougher Sunday by Sunday. To them I spoke. What do they know, or care, about Socialism? But they are the ready, unthinking material on which anarchy and all its forces work. A single stone thrown, a single shot fired might whirl them into riot and tragedy. Then would come soldiers and the shedding of innocent blood. To them I spoke, begging them in the name of God to commit no wrong against man or goods, to keep to themselves, to help each other."

"That was yesterday," said Father Lynch, "and before this Labor Day is over there will be a soap-box on every corner and on top of it an orator, Socialist, I. W. W., or some other thing, denouncing you and the Church as the foe of the poor and the unproducing parasite of the rich."

Dean Driscoll turned again to contemplate the blue line across the middle of Orrin Mountain. His problem lay heavy upon him. He saw his people drifting from what had been scarcity and privation in the summer to what would soon be terrible want and suffering. And his strong old

heart was shaken by the feeling of his powerlessness to prevent or to help.

"I did not tell them to give up their strike—I dared not," he murmured to himself. "God was not pleased to give me wisdom to know what to say, what was right, in that. He alone knows whether I should not have begged them to go back to work. Even time will not tell now," he said sadly, "after the wheel has turned, whether I could have done it, or that it would have been right."

"And there is more," said Father Huetter. "Jim Loyd came to church yesterday, and for the first time in years he came boldly up to his old pew beside his sister. The Socialists and the fiery agitators have that to-day. Last week, after John Sargent, the owner of the mill, came here, they were saying that Loyd had sold out the strike to him. Now they are saying that John Sargent used the Church and the power of the priests to get a hold upon Loyd. It is all a lie against Loyd, because he was holding the strikers so strictly and peaceably; but they are saying it all the more loudly because they know that in their hearts."

Father Driscoll rose quickly, as with a sudden decision, and shook his broad, spare shoulders.

"Come with me, Father Lynch," he said. "You have time for a step through the town, before your train goes."

Milton is one of the many small cities which

have grown up so quickly during the last twenty years in the watercourses of the lower Adirondacks. It is what is called a one-mill town. That is, its life practically depends upon its water power and that is owned, high and low, by a single company. The Milton Machinery Company holds the life and the pulse of the town in its hand. You may say that every individual in the place who is not independently wealthy lives, directly or indirectly, from the earnings of that single plant.

The individual worker who has grown to middle manhood in this plant is bound to it as thoroughly, almost, as any system was ever able to bind a feudal serf to the land. He cannot work in any other mill in the town. There is no other. No other occupation is open to him. He cannot move away. He has his family, probably a little home which he cannot sacrifice.

The normal condition, under which a worker is free to sell his labor or not, as he wishes, and under which an employer is free to buy or not to buy, at the worker's terms, do not obtain here. Perhaps that normal condition never did fully obtain anywhere in civilization. Here, in this town, it is impossible.

The company or corporation is not free. The greatest wealth it has is fixed at this point, by water power and established railroad facilities. It cannot move away. It cannot employ other men. It can, of course, with full police protec-

tion, and at enormous expense, bring in a temporary force of workers, unskilled and floating, and with these it can, nominally, run its plant for a time. But this is only for effect; to discourage the regular workers and to compel them to come back to work, at the company's terms. To expect to run any great plant with, perhaps, four to six thousand untrained, unsteady men—each one destroying more values each day, by wasting materials and mishandling machinery, than his labor could possibly produce—would be mere madness. The trained worker who by his life habits and family obligations is bound to be efficient, steady, and loyal is as valuable and as essential to the conduct of a plant as is every costly piece of machinery in it. He is even more so, for money cannot replace him at once.

The situation is simple. These men must work for this company. This company must employ these men.

When a strike or a lock-out is declared in a town like this there can be no weakening on either side. The sides are locked too closely in the struggle. One party or the other must lose a very valuable, an almost vital advantage.

Starvation stands at the back of one party, bankruptcy is a ditch behind the other.

Here Socialism comes in with a remedy—Let the State confiscate the plant and run it for the benefit of the workers.

But this particular State is not interested; it

knows nothing about the business of making machinery.

The remedy is not at hand, cannot be procured.

Then, says Socialism, orate, cry aloud, cut, tear, and burn if necessary, to make the State interest itself.

Anarchy and the attendant harpies, hearing the glorious words, rush in to spread the flame.

And intelligent, God-fearing men who have worked all their lives, who want only to work and be paid for it, and who would not tear a board from a neighbor's fence, stand looking nervously at the pinched faces and too big eyes of their unfed children.

They do not know what to do. Who will tell them?

"Forty-one years," said the Dean slowly, laying his hand on Father Lynch's arm, as the two walked down the street, "have I been here in this place. I saw it grow from a forge and a ford and a little tannery into what it is. I went over the trails from here to Fulton, a hundred and fifty miles. Some families saw a priest once in the year, some not that. And they kept the Faith. Dear man, how they kept the Faith!

"Often it seems so short, the time, when I look back, that I think the Angel must have brushed his wing over it in the night. And look! There are twenty like you up there in the hills where I went alone, and forty thousand souls gathered about you, and your churches and your

little schools. And here is this city with its churches and its two good Catholic schools. And I have said to myself:

"The people are safe now. They will never lose the Faith. After they have kept it through all those times and changes nothing can ever argue them out of it.

"And do you know that I have seen more loss of faith here among my men in the last three months than ever happened anywhere in times when there were no priests and no churches!"

"The men are idle, and careless," Father Lynch explained.

"It is not that," said the Dean sadly. "I have seen strikes and strikes. The same thing is happening in every one of our small cities where a single industry controls the place. The men are forever galled by the thought that they are bound for life to one company and one piece of work. And the Socialist comes along and stands at the mill gate in the lunch hour and tells the men that they are slaves, that the old institutions, the old superstitions, the Church and so on, made them so and will keep them so."

"If the Socialists want reforms, why do they not go about and get them as other people have to do; and leave the Church to her business?"

"There," said the Dean, "is where Father Huetter would ask you: What is the Church's business? But let that pass. Do you read any of the Socialist pamphlets, Father Lynch?"

"I do not." Father Lynch acquitted himself decisively. "I have one Socialist in my parish. He spends more on books than he does on fertilizer. I can prove it on his fields of corn."

"Maybe you are right. Perhaps you are as wise on the matter as we who do read them. But, whenever they say anything that is definite, they say this: The whole base of modern civilization is wrong: it must be changed: before it can be changed two things must be abolished: they are, the conservative power of private ownership of property and the conservative power of the Catholic Church: these two stand in the way of all sweeping changes.

"Now, when the men are full-fed and times are well with them they chaff the orators a little and go back to their work. It is a noontime diversion. But when they are hungry and there is no work to go back to, they stand and think. Man, don't I see it in their eyes? They look at me. Haven't I all their lives told them what to do? Can I tell them now? Do you not hear the question hurled at them from every side, and see it gripping into their mind: What, after all, is the Church? What am *I* doing for them now, when they need me? If they do wrong, and come to church afterward, I can tell them that they did wrong.

"Do you see that crowd all up and down the street below us there? I could stand on the steps of the bank and raise my hand and two thousand

men would listen. What would I tell them? Should I tell them to go back to work and give up the fight that means so much to them, or should I tell them to go on starving quietly? Am I, then, a blind shepherd to a stumbling people!"

"Forgive me, Dean," said Father Lynch with feeling; "I was flippant back there. I did not know that you took it so."

But the Dean was not listening. His thought ran into a yet deeper current of self-reproach.

"Schools!" he exclaimed, with something that was almost bitterness in his voice. "Schools! I can open the schools to-morrow. But can the children come to them if they have not bread in their little stomachs! Can I answer them that!"

They were getting down now among the crowds of State Street. They were not the holiday crowds of other Labor Days. When a town has been cut off from its one source of money, when men are walking and standing about the streets by the hundred literally without a cent in their pockets, there is no holiday-making. The faces of the older men were moody; many of them had not had a smoke for days. The younger men and the boys were noisy and inclined to be ugly. They moved and pushed from one packed group to another. In the center of each group, on the soap-box that Father Lynch had predicted, a leather-voiced orator bellowed forth one of the ten thousand cure-alls that So-

cialism is father to. If a particular speaker did not please them the young fellows jammed in and broke up his group. No one was being hurt, but it was not the inconsequent roystering of, for instance, a college crowd. There was an underrunning sullenness in these crowds that needed only some quick, sharp provocation to burst it into terrible and destroying anger.

It was noticeable that there were hardly any women on the street, through there had been no actual violence nor any word of it. A sense of brooding danger was in the air, and such women as had to pass along State Street slipped unobtrusively on their way, keeping as close as possible to the fronts of the stores on either side.

"Now this," said Father Lynch, studying the crowd that filled the street from curb to curb, "this has nothing to do with Socialism. These talkers might as well be shouting the multiplication table, or beating drums. All the crowd wants from them is noise, plenty of it. Nobody is listening. This is not Socialism, 'tis a mob."

"Dear man," said the Dean, "there *is* no such thing as a mob. Every crowd like this is made of men—every man with his own hunger and his own anger and his own bitterness. There are men—I could point to them—men that I baptized, men that I caned in school, men that I married. Are they a mob to me? Are they not the souls that God has written on my account. If they fight, if they burn, if they kill—God have

mercy!—will a mob answer for them? It will be every man marking his own soul!

"You say they are not listening. How can you know? How can you know that in all this outpouring of noise there are not words of truth? And truth, even when it is dragged to unjust conclusions, truth carries."

"Listen to this."

A slight, dark young man of French-Canadian type, on a box near the curb, was shrilly denouncing Jim Loyd because the latter, when he had been in absolute command of the strike, had not allowed a Socialist speaker in the town; had insisted, in fact, that the strike was the business of the men of Milton and of no one else.

"Why," he was shouting, "did your Jim Loyd keep the Socialists away from here as long as he could? Why? Because he did not want you to hear the truth. He wanted to be the big man and make you obey him. Now he has sold you out, tried to sell you like sheep. For why? For what? Money, money; always money is master! And the priests! The Church! Did they not tell him to do it? Are they not the friends of the strong, of the powers? They want things as they are. They do not want the change. In the change they would lose you. Suffer, they preach to you, and peace. Suffer, yes! You are suffering. But peace—Where is peace?" he shrieked. "Do they give you peace? They tell

you to hold your hand, and to starve—in peace. If you die they will bury you—for a—"

He stopped bewildered. A sudden ominous hush had fallen over the crowd. He saw that they were not looking at him but at something beside him. He turned sharply—and looked full into the white, pain-drawn face of Dean Driscoll. The old priest was so tall that he stood a head and more above the crowd. His face was on a level with the speaker's.

The youth's mouth fell open, and his right hand jerked instinctively toward his forehead. He drew it back quickly and turned again to the crowd, trying to go on with his speech. But they would not let him. They had seen him lose his nerve. And they knew just what that little gesture of his hand to his head had meant. They jeered him down from his box.

"Now that boy," said the Dean, as the two priests pushed their way on down the street, "was raised in a Catholic school. Do I not know the quick snap of a boy's hand to his hat, when I come around a corner and see him with a stone in his hand, or something?"

"No doubt," said Father Lynch. "And it's likely that some poor, foolish French priest in Cohoes sent him to college, too. Now, explain it."

"I can explain nothing," admitted the Dean. "Long ago I found that out. The boy is—a boy. He is unbaked. Some of it is bravado, to show

that he is not afraid of the things that his good old father and mother loved. Part of it is what the French have been writing and saying for three hundred years and more. And the rest of it is what is being heard day in and day out around the mills of Cohoes and Schenectady."

The Dean looked appraisingly down the street.

"There are," he estimated aloud, "two hundred or more of these agitators in the town to-day. They may be talking on anything from the universal deluge to suffrage, but their one immediate purpose here to-day is to create trouble, to excite our men into some lawlessness. The talkers and Socialism need the advertising. But they did not come here and pay their own expenses to talk for the love of man nor for the love of talking. Somebody paid their expenses, and is paying them for their day's work. Who?

"God knows, it does not fit me, with my foot in the grave, to think men worse than they are. But John Sargent is a ruthless man. He would do that, or anything else, to get the soldiers here. It would be his logical move, he being the man that he is."

They were come now down into the densest of the crowds, where men stood packed all across the street. Here in the store floor on the right was where Jim Loyd had sat all through the summer, dispensing justice and food to the most needy, and ruling the strike with a hand of iron.

He was working there still, appealing by letter and telegram to newspapers and individuals and labor unions everywhere for the relief money that came in such little dribbles and was eaten up so quickly. But though he worked eighteen hours a day, when all the world about him was idle, his work now lacked the driving energy and confidence that it had shown before that night last week when John Sargent had offered him fifty thousand dollars to get the strike declared off. All men knew that the offer had been made. No man knew how it had been received. Jim Loyd did not tell. No one dared speak to him of it.

He had seen suspicion and distrust of him in the eyes of men who had known him all his life, and it had cut deep into the violent, proud character of the man: the more so because he remembered that in that first mad moment of John Sargent's offer to him he had looked—looked at the temptation. He followed the routine of his work doggedly, but he was not ruling the strike now. Nobody was ruling it. It was drifting blindly toward riot and destruction. And his hand was not raised to hold it back. He was not sulking. He would have gone out into the street and died for his cause and his men. But the power of his hand was gone.

All day long he had been listening to the frothy oratory that billowed up and down the street. If he were really in charge of the strike now, as he had been, he would have picked out

two or three quiet, resolute men to escort each talker to the first train out of town. He, too, believed, as the Dean out in the crowd was even then saying, that John Sargent had secretly supplied the money to bring these strangers into the situation. What had come to the priest as intuition had come to Loyd as almost certain knowledge. And now as he looked out over the crowd and thought of the work that John Sargent was trying to do, and what he had tried to do to him, Jim Loyd, and to his manhood, a red mist of blinding anger swept before his mind. He was back in Sargent's office on that night when the latter had offered his bribe, and now as then he found his fingers aching to take the man by the throat and take his life with his naked hands. He rose shaking his shoulders, like a breathed steer, and came to the front of the office.

He saw the Dean and Father Lynch out there trying to make way through the crowd, saw that the Dean was very pale and tired-looking, and he opened the door to tell them to come inside and rest a moment and watch the crowd. But there was no moving in any direction. Some new force was jamming the crowd up from farther down the street. But no one could, at this point, see what it was.

Little Joe Page, the town dwarf and antic, had gotten possession of a kerosene barrel at the curb and had clambered up on it. He was holding a meeting of his own, and his audience was full

three times larger than that of any other orator of the day. With the barrel, he had gotten possession of the main argument of the Socialists. Things were unequal in the world: they must be leveled. He had often thought of that, he argued. He lived and ate in a boarding-house, he said; where seven tall, long-armed men also ate. He named and accused them all, and the crowd, knowing the men by name, cheered him on to his conclusion. Why should those men, he demanded, be able to reach out and grab the firsts of everything, while he with his fourteen-inch arms must wait until the last of the plate was passed to him? He clamored and ranted with the best, that this must be changed. A law must be passed that all long-armed men living in boarding-houses should have their elbows tied to their sides. His argument was as sound and as practicable as many that were being hysterically shouted along the street.

Fifteen years before, when his little double joints were getting too stiff for the hard service, a circus had dropped Joe Page stranded in Milton. He had climbed sturdily on to a high stool before a lathe table in the Milton Machinery works and, asking nothing of any man, had fitted himself, dwarfed and vagabond mite that he was, into a place of respect as the fastest and cleverest lathe-worker in the plant.

Men in that crowd loved the little dwarf for his independence and his funny old, old face.

They said, barring length, that he was more of a man than most. Now he was giving them the only laugh of the day, indeed of many days. And they were grateful, for they knew that he was as hungry and as bitter in heart as they.

"There now, do you see," said Father Lynch at the Dean's elbow, "the little man has the hill on them all. He knows what he wants and how it should be done."

Father Driscoll was looking down the street. He saw what others could not see. A look of anger and trembling anxiety clouded his face. Jim Loyd, watching him, knew that something threatening was impending, and he pushed out to see.

John Sargent was walking coolly, deliberately up the street. In years John Sargent had not set foot on the streets of Milton, except to cross the sidewalk to and from his automobile. On this day, of all days, when he should have kept away, he walked contemptuously through the crowd with an air of open aggravation. At his elbow at every step were men, serious, good men, who had worked patiently all their lives for his father and for him, building up the fortune that he was now using against them. He looked them in the eyes, and sneered; sneered at their hunger, at their patience, at their self-control as they carefully made a path for him through the packed crowd. Every speaker that he passed execrated him to the crowd, crying him out to

them as their enemy, who was holding the bread from their mouths. They bullied the crowd for cowardice and dared it to stop him now and settle its question with him at once. But no man's hand was raised. They gave him way so that no man even brushed his coat in the press.

What was in John Sargent's mind when he started for that walk up the street, is hard to say.

Through a pretended local Socialistic committee which existed only in his own office, he had sent out the call and the expense money to bring the agitators into the town for Labor Day. The strikers must be incited to rioting or violence of some sort. This would give him the chance to demand State troops from the Governor. A show of overwhelming force on the ground would break the heart of the strike. He would then have only to make the merest pretense of running the mill with imported labor, and his men would begin coming back to work.

But it was now coming toward evening. His reports told that the men did not seem ready to fall into his plans. They were sullen but quiet, and paying little heed to the wild talk. He had spent good money on this day and he was not minded to see it go for nothing. He knew that his own presence would excite and anger the crowd more than any talk could do. Though physical fear was a thing which he had never known, it is not likely that he expected to be act-

ually attacked. Still he seemed to be doing everything calculated to that end. But men drew soberly away from him. He saw that he would not be molested unless he struck or pushed some one. It maddened him to think that a stupid crowd could so mate his plans by its mere stolidity.

When he came to where little Joe Page stood on his barrel demanding the law to restrain long-armed men, he scowled angrily. This was not the thing. John Sargent did not want the lightning to discharge itself harmlessly in laughter and nonsense.

Little Joe, feeling the sudden charged tenseness of the air about him, looked around for the cause.

John Sargent shouted:

"Get down, clown," he commanded, stamping his foot in rage.

Now there was no reason in the world why Joe Page must obey an order of John Sargent. But when one man has given another his unquestioning obedience through the working hours of years, the habit is liable to be stronger than any circumstances.

The dwarf made a handspring off the barrel, landed on his feet and came to attention, with a mock circus salute, directly beneath John Sargent's waistcoat.

Whether he took the salute as impudence and was blinded with rage, or whether he did it with

calculated malice, does not matter: John Sargent raised a heavy boot and kicked the tiny man in the side. The midget fell to the walk.

The crowd went roaring, stark mad. Men shouted and tore at each other to come near Sargent. The man nearest him struck him a quick, glancing blow in the face that sent him spinning round and round. He would have fallen and the crowd would have trampled him to death had not a lean, strong old arm reached out over another's shoulder and caught him. It was Father Driscoll who had managed to reach him just in time. He caught him to him and pushed him up against the store front. Then he turned to face the crowd, and his great height and wide frame completely covered the other man from sight.

The eyes of the old priest blazed and his breath came fast with the excitement, but the crowd looking into his face knew that he was in command. He raised his hand and the hands of the crowd dropped. Short, ugly-looking clubs, that had suddenly appeared from nowhere, stole quietly back to their places. He spoke to them in a voice that was quiet but so tense that it carried up and across the street in the strained hush.

"My men," he said, "no man dare blame you for your anger. But did not this man, who is, for the time at least, your enemy, did he not come here with purpose to anger you, to get you to strike or threaten him? Heads that are cool

among you and can think know what he has to gain from your anger. Will you let him beat you in a game of wits? Because he thinks you a senseless mob that he can play upon at will, shall you prove to him that he is right?"

He did not preach to them, he merely put into the concrete what he had said to his own men and boys the day before. And men of his own flock and men of no flock, alike, knew that he spoke God's truth and common sense.

In the meantime John Sargent had gone. Jim Loyd had reached out and pulled him into the office of the strike committee.

Again these two men faced and measured each other as they had on the night when Sargent had tried to bribe Loyd.

Sargent's face was discolored and his breath came in quick gasps, but he was first to speak.

"You see," he taunted Loyd, "what tools you have to work with. You thought you could hold them. It cost you fifty thousand dollars to think. With a lift of my foot I knocked over your work of months."

"Mr. Sargent," said Loyd slowly, "once before I saw you so close to death that your life was not as sure as the turn of a coin. And you would be dead out there on the walk now if Father Driscoll had not saved you. I do not know why you were saved, but I have an idea."

"Is it interesting?" queried Sargent.

Loyd looked at the thick red lines under the

skin of Sargent's neck. They told of wrong living and an overworked heart.

"I think," he pronounced evenly, "that you will not die by any man's hand. You're a brave man and you hate a coward. For that reason, I think, you'll die of fright, scared to death. That will be hard on you."

"Cheerful!" snarled Sargent. "I'll turn prophet, too. There'll be State troops here tomorrow. I've been attacked on the street by rioting strikers. I am going now to wire the Governor. Somebody else will be scared to death before this is over." He stepped quickly to a door at the rear and out into the alley.

At that moment Father Driscoll, followed by Father Lynch, was coming in at the front. He sat down rather heavily. At his age no man passes through strong excitement without being shaken.

"Jimmie," said he shortly, "are you sulking? Are you, then, the first man in the world that has had to go on with his appointed work in the face of distrust and suspicion?"

"I'm afraid it's no use now, Dean," said Loyd dully. "Sargent has just gone to telegraph for troops. And he'll get them, too."

The Dean rose quickly, with a new grip on himself.

"Come, Father Lynch," he said briskly, "it's time you were at the station." At the door, he turned to Loyd, saying:

"Jimmie, soldiers or no soldiers, it is your work to get these disturbers quietly out of the town."

John Sargent was standing at the telegraph counter in the railroad station writing the last of three telegrams. One was to the Governor of the State, another to the Colonel of a National Guard regiment, and the third, more important than all, was to a politician in Albany who was said to be above colonels and governors.

The Dean took up the telegraph pad as John Sargent laid it down. Under the latter's eyes he wrote his own message to the Governor: a plain message, saying that the trouble at Milton was manufactured, that there was no danger and no need of troops.

John Sargent read the message, as the Dean had intended he should. To John Sargent it said, in effect, that he lied.

His face turned livid and his whole body shook with rage, so that he had to struggle for speech.

"So you," he stammered, "you, that preach peace; you are going to fight me!"

The Dean signed his telegram, counted the words, and handed it with the money to the clerk. Then he looked down an instant at the veins of John Sargent's shaking hands: they were too big.

He looked curiously into Sargent's face and said:

"Has your doctor been telling you nothing lately?"

Just then a little twitch of pain shot across

John Sargent's left breast. He winced. It was nothing, that little pain: he had felt it before, several times. But that two men, within five minutes of each other, should know all about it, and presume to tell him about it, was—annoying. He turned on his heel and walked away.

When the Dean had seen Father Lynch on his train, he walked slowly up the street through the thinning crowds.

The day was nearly over—a day that might have ended in tragedy and untold sorrow for him and his people. He had reached out his hand and, maybe, saved a man's life. He had sent his appeal to the powers of State. He had done the little that God had put near his hand. In the excitement of action he had been upheld, had felt that he was doing something.

Now he looked into the pinched, weary-eyed faces of his men, and he saw that, after all, he had done nothing. The problem was as it was yesterday, as it would be to-morrow. They were hungry and he had not told them, could not tell them, what to do.

His head bowed to his breast as he walked, and men who had seen him save a life and calm a fury just a short time before, wondered if the Dean was indeed getting old.

In his heart he was echoing sadly the plaint of the disciples in the desert place: What shall I say to these people—*For they have nothing to eat!*

CHAPTER III

"MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?"

"BUT, if the State is only a policeman," argued Father Huetter, "how is it that we find its power working only for the protection of the one side?"

"Well?" Dean Driscoll questioned, for he knew that the young priest would have an illustration ready.

"For instance, when John Sargent—The Milton Machinery Company—appealed to the Governor for troops to protect the plant against the strikers here, the Governor was willing to send them. He would have sent them had you not personally taken the matter to him and shown him that there was really no need for such protection."

"Yes," the Dean admitted, "he would have sent them. He is sworn to preserve the outward peace of the law."

"Put it on that ground, then; the business of the State is solely to preserve order. How much was the State willing to spend for the purpose? It would have cost five thousand dollars for transportation, and one thousand dollars a day to

pay and keep a regiment here. The State thought itself bound to spend that money as a preventive measure. Now, suppose, on the other hand, that you had telegraphed the Governor, saying: 'My people are starving; they do not need soldiers, they need bread; they are desperate, and if they are not fed there will be riot and destruction; instead of sending soldiers, send an officer of the State here to distribute the thousand dollars a day for food and clothing; that will prevent all disorder.'

"That would have been intelligent prevention, and protection for all. But what would have happened if you had sent such a telegram?"

"Well," said the Dean, with a twinkle under his gray brows, "about the second day, I would have gotten a letter from the Bishop asking me if I did not feel that I was getting old."

"And you would have been headlined in the papers," Father Huetter went on, smiling, "as the priest Socialist. And your friends would have said—"

"Oh, they'd be charitable," broke in the Dean, "they'd hardly go farther than to say temporary madness, though some might go so far as to say senile decay."

"And yet it would have been the simplest and wisest measure of police protection that could have been suggested."

"You are right, Father, without a doubt. But this State, and it is, perhaps, the most in-

telligent commonwealth in the world, is not yet educated up to the idea."

"Then, is Socialism right when it tells us that the State must be forcibly made to see its problems?"

"Socialism, my boy, no more goes to the root of the matter of Labor and Capital in this State than does the Fourth Dimension. Socialism is a philosophy of life, founded on the false premise that human happiness can be secured through the equal distribution of money.

"Rightly or wrongly, this Republic is founded on the directly opposing theory, that human happiness can only be secured by the individual doing that which he wishes to do. Almighty God would seem to have recognized that theory, in giving men free will.

"Rightly or wrongly, again, this Republic lives on the dogma that a government is the expression of the will of the majority of individuals. If the government be wrong or weak or faulty, then the blame lies on the majority of individuals. They and they alone have the remedy in their hands.

"Both of these fundaments of Americanism may be wrong. But, right or wrong, they are the only principles upon which men will ever really consent to be governed."

"But," said Father Huetter, rising, "how can any government pretend to be the will of the people when it permits one man, John Sargent,

one individual, by his greed and hardness to force suffering upon six or eight thousand individuals, every one of whom is, in theory, just as important to the government as is he? Do the majority of individuals in this State wish that?"

"No," the Dean agreed sadly, "it is a great and terrible sin upon the public conscience. But it is the sin of indifference, the indifference of the great and careless many to the things that do not immediately concern them. The public conscience is muddy, and slow to form itself. It is ever years behind the advancing complications of life. It hears about this strike, knows that there is suffering here. It would be glad to put an end to the suffering if that could be done out of hand. A small part of the public goes so far as to put its hand in its pocket and send a few dollars to Jim Loyd to relieve a little of the suffering. Then it goes about its own business, the business of living and making money and rearing children and dying. It is a busy public. Some day it will rouse itself and frame an effective law forcing the fair and peaceable adjustment of all labor troubles. But it will do that simply, and as a matter of course, because it occurs as the right thing to do, not because it will expect thereby to remove the discontent and suffering of the world.

"Then it will walk away, and let the result take care of itself. It is a loose and haphazard way,

indeed; but it is the way of a young and untrammeled people that refuses to be governed more than is absolutely necessary. Some day, maybe, this people will be stricken terribly for its reckless confidence in itself. But, dear God in His mercy soften the blow! For this is a beautiful land, a young David among the nations! And the heart, O God! The heart of this people is good!" The tired old eyes lifted and glowed warm and clear with his love for the land and the people to whom he had given a good man's all, a life of service.

"And I sit here," he went on, shyly dropping the mask over his feelings, "prosing to you, young man, when it's long past your bedtime, prosing of the dulness of the people, the great, bewildered, many-headed people; and I do not know what is right myself, in the simplest thing that comes to my hand.

"I kept the troops away from here. And did I do right? Now you saw what John Sargent did to-day. Brought in two hundred deputy sheriffs whom he had forced Sheriff Beals to swear in. That will cost John Beals his office at the next election, but that does not help now. These are worse than soldiers would have been, for they are gathered from everywhere, under no discipline. Sargent can get them to do anything. The soldiers, at least, would have obeyed only their officers. I fear I did wrong."

"No. I'm sure you were wise, Dean. The

public knows that these men are the hired guards of Sargent, even though they wear the badge of the county. A conflict with them means bitterness and maybe bloodshed, but it will not discredit the cause of the strikers. On the other hand, if the men fought with the soldiers they would have to be beaten in the end anyhow, and it would lose them the sympathy of the State."

"I do not know," said the Dean. "I walked up past the mill in the dusk. They were there, his guards, with the seal and the authority of the law upon them, slinging their rifles carelessly and parading before the gates. Every move, every look of theirs was provocation. And our own men and boys were strung along on the other side of the street, standing nervous and cowed. They were on their own ground, mind you; in their own town; looking gloomily up at the mill to which they give their lives. Yet every man was feeling somehow that he was an outlaw. Now you do not have to impress that upon a man very many times until he begins to feel like agreeing with you, and making it good.

"See what it is, now, to be an old man, and a priest of peace, and yet to be unregenerate!" Father Huetter bit back a smile as the Dean confessed. "I had not worked my life out in that mill. I was not branded an outlaw and provoked. I was not hungry. Yet there was not man or boy there with blacker anger in his heart than I had. If anything had happened in that

moment, I would have fought blindly, senselessly, with nothing to fight for, nothing to win. So, I have seen men fight the torment of death.

"Forgive me," he said quickly, "I was beside myself. Think of it. I know that there is not one of those hungry, despairing boys in that crowd to-night who is not better off, richer, in his strong hands and his clean heart, than is John Sargent. But did *I* think of that when the anger swept over me? How can they? I fear. How long can they hold themselves?"

"I think they are doing wonderfully," said Father Huetter quietly. "Loyd has them in hand again as well as ever. And he is everywhere. He never worked ten hours a day in the mill as furiously as he works twenty now at this."

"That is well," nodded the Dean. "His heart needs work in these days. It's the best thing he could get now, plenty of it. And go you to your bed now. I've talked you blind-sleepy with my prating, and you've your early morning ahead of you. I must read something, for the peace of my mind."

"I guess I *will* say good-night, Dean." The young priest swung out of the room and went lightly up the stairs to his own quarters.

The Dean turned to his book and dropped into his characteristic reading attitude. He sat like a boy at a school desk, one long arm stretched out idly across the desk, the other hand cupped over his eyes and supporting his head. Under

the seventy-four years of life and hard work he carried a boy's fresh heart and a boy's direct, unconscious way of things. He read from old Ramon de Monte Brazo peering down from his monastic eyrie in the Pyrenees at the doings of Simon de Montfort and the Albigenses on the plains of Provence.

The ancient monk was a faint-heart, it seemed. He saw the whole of Christianity disrupted by the schism of these terrible people: princes and kings fell away from the Church and the world tumbled about men's ears. Surely it was the end of all things. See now, the Dean chided with the freedom of old friendship, this it is to be of little faith. You are dead and dust and forgotten, and so are they. Worse than they have come and gone and will come again and go, and the great, lumbering world goes on, with the shoulder of God keeping it in the way. So shall I be dead and dust, with my worrying and my people, without even a little black-letter book to tell what disturbed me. John Sargent and Jim Loyd, Autocrat and Socialist, trying to split the earth between them and then lying down to give back their shares of the dust of it. And I, a blind man poking futilely with a stick, thinking I am helping or hindering!

His eyes stayed upon the book, but his mind strayed away to far countries. It was the hour when he loved to sit alone and feel the peace of sleep and forgetfulness settle down over his peo-

ple and his little city. Father Tenney once said that the Dean never went to his own bed until he had tucked in the covers over the town of Milton.

All men in Milton knew his custom, knew that so long as the light burned in the little library the door was open, knew that Father Driscoll, himself, would come to the door to greet. And men came, men who did not find it easy to come in the broad, glaring day. Men came whose faces were not seen in church. Men came with trouble and shame and sorrow, for joy does not come, hesitating, in the night.

Their steps were not the hurrying, frightened steps that come from the bedside of sudden sickness. They were steps that lagged, and stopped, perhaps, in front of the door, and then went on past; only to return still more slowly, and hesitate, and then step quickly, with sudden-caught resolution, up to the door.

A step came now, one different from other steps; a quiet step, of a man not courting observation, yet determined, as of a man with fixed purpose. The Dean, listening, did not recognize that step among the other types that he knew.

The short, quick ring brought the Dean to the door, and he extended his hand to draw into the circle of the hall light a man—John Sargent!

The two greeted mechanically and then stood facing each other a moment: the Dean puzzled,

but frank and ready to meet his man upon whatever ground; Sargent scowling fixedly, his purpose set upon his face.

The Dean quickly remembered himself, and led the way into the library. He saw that Sargent was seated comfortably, and then made business of turning his own chair away from the desk and lowering himself into it, giving the man full time for his opening.

"When this strike started," Sargent began, without address or preface, "I kept in touch with it from New York. Day and night for nearly three months I had a grip on it by the end of a wire. I should have come here in the beginning—but never mind that. Long before the end of that time, I came to the conclusion that this was no ordinary strike. It was not the while-you-wait, flash-in-the-pan sort that the unions order, just for a chance to curse the men who have the brains to make money."

Father Driscoll shifted easily back into his chair, prepared to listen at length.

"It was an intelligent strike," Sargent continued his course of reasoning. "It attended strictly to the business of striking, and it did nothing else. I said to myself: 'That is a one-man strike. No union or set of men could handle it that way. There is one big man with brains behind it.' I wired my people here:

" 'There is one man behind that strike. Who is he?'

"'Loyd,' they said.

"'Get him,' I ordered.

"'Can't be done,' they said; 'too big and too straight.'"

Father Driscoll nodded sharply.

"There is no such man," Sargent came back with a rasp. "No man lives who cannot be bought, for something."

The old priest straightened tensely in his chair. But he said nothing. He wished to hear the rest.

"Then I came here myself," Sargent took up his story again, "to look Jim Loyd over; to get his price. There was nothing in the mill to offer him. But every man needs money; always needs money. I offered him fifty thousand dollars. You've heard that, I suppose?"

The Dean sat like a statue, with no expression in his face except that of contempt and disgust of the man's coarse cynicism.

"You wouldn't say so, of course," Sargent commented.

"And it got him! I tell you, it got him!" he broke out, bringing his hand down on the arm of his chair. "Why, in another minute he'd have been reaching out his hand for it! And then he thought of something, and stopped. And then he wanted to kill me. Cheerful beggar! Then he rushed out of the office like a madman.

"What was it he had thought of? That's

what I wanted to know. They had told me he was a Socialist. That put me off the trail. I knew I could buy any professional Socialist in the world for half the money.

"Then I found out he was a Catholic, and I said—phutt—I might have known! You never can tell when a Catholic is going to remember something, and back up on you.

"Then I found that he was something of a protégé of yours, that he owed you a good deal; and I said—"

"My dear Mr. Sargent," interrupted the Dean, elaborating his politeness, "you have found out a great deal, but your information is not all exact. Jim Loyd does not owe me anything—Jim Loyd *pays* his debts."

Sargent winced and stared. Two things had struck him. He was a gentleman in the house of another gentleman, and that other had had a chance to note pointedly for him a lack of politeness on his part. Also, what the Dean had emphasized about Jim Loyd paying his debts sounded oddly like a threat, and it puzzled him. He did not know what it meant.

"Well, I suppose I ought to have addressed you as Father, but I'm not used to —"

"Never mention it," the Dean waved the apology aside, "it is purely a matter of—taste. You were saying—?"

Under the Dean's cool badgering, Sargent was

losing his temper and, with it, the control of the conversation; and he knew it. But he picked up the thread again surlily:

"I said then, and I was right: 'Jim Loyd's head did not furnish the brains for this strike.' There was something older and bigger and wiser than Jim Loyd in this. He is brave enough, and bold enough, I'll give him that. But he is not steady or sure enough in purpose. There was something powerful, and gray, and deep-in-the-root behind him. And that was the power of the Catholic Church. That was you."

"Ah," said the Dean smoothly, "and have you perhaps brought the fifty thousand with you, for me?"

"No." Sargent snapped. "I haven't got anything that you want. I know that. I am not a fool."

"Um!" The Dean clamped his teeth down upon his anger. When he answered, it was in a voice of smoothly cutting steel.

"Mr. Sargent," he said, "I think you would do well to come to the point. I am an old man, but I regret that my temper is not what it should be."

Sargent was suddenly steadied by the tone of the old priest. He had not come here to quarrel. He knew how wrong and utterly indefensible was his position with this old man whose life and works challenged everything that John Sargent was and did.

"At least," he said, breathing quickly in the effort to recover himself, "your Church and you are bound to listen to reason. I put it this way: Your Church is the Church of the poor, of the masses. Yes. A man does not have to be a student to know that. All he has to do is to get up early enough on a Sunday to see them hurrying to Mass. There's something there that they want very badly, or my men wouldn't climb out of their bed to go after it. They'd send the children after it, or tell you to send your sermon around with the Sunday paper.

"But the masses, the people, as they call themselves, never perpetuate anything. They roll and they shift forever: it's history. And the history of your Church is that she has lasted all this time because she had the wisdom to stand by the things that last, the powers upon which civilization rests. The right and the strength of civilization stands on the inviolability of private property. Government is organized and supported for just that one thing. And I tell you that in this country just now, more than in any other place or time, your Church, for her very life, has got to stand by the order of things or go down with that order.

"I am no ranter. I make money discounting the scares and the bugbears of other men. But I can see what is coming. Socialism, ramping through this country, is going to throw it into the most terrible war that men have ever seen.

The powers of order will fight to the last ditch for the rights of man—the real rights of man; the right of a man to use his brains and his work; the right of a man to own what he has gained, and to give it to his children. These powers of order may go down. Our civilization and all that it has secured to us may go down. But if they do, if they do, your Church will go down with them.

"Does a mob stop at one thing? I tell you, not a rag of a thing that is old, or time-honored, or blood-earned, will be left. Your Church must stand with the strength of property and of private rights and hold back this crisis, or she will go down with the crash of the rest."

The Dean was interested. It seemed that he had heard snatches of something like this somewhere before.

"Your history," he said, smiling a little grimly, "does you credit, Mr. Sargent. Your prophecy does no credit to the good sense and the brains of American men and women. But it seems that I have heard something very like it before, heard it, now I remember, from the Socialists here on the streets of Milton on Labor Day. But both you and the Socialists forget one thing: the Catholic Church is the *one* institution on this earth whose existence is assured. Any calculation, any prophecy from either of you that does not count in that fact is bound to be faulty."

The simple, unarguing faith of the big, keen-

eyed old man angered Sargent, as simple, unanswering obstacles always anger men of his domineering type. He broke out into what he had really come to say.

"Let that stand," he said. "I'm not interested. You want the point. The other day you blocked me when I asked the Governor for the protection of the State troops. To-day I had to buy protection from the county. This evening you walked up past my mill. Your men—they are my men, for I feed them and give them a chance to live, when they are willing to take it—were grouped along there by the hundred, looking for a chance to attack my property. You, by your very presence there, were giving them countenance.

"You have furnished Jim Loyd with the brains and the steady guiding power for this strike from the beginning. You preach peace. Your Church stands for law and order. And yet, if you do not actually incite rebellion, you, at least, give it strength. Not only do you give it the help of your own influence, which is great, but you put the power of your Church behind it. You make it a holy war. And do I not know what it does for those men? Do I not know that you could go out upon your altar any Sunday and say ten words that would break the backbone of this strike?

"And yet with this power and this responsibility in your hands, what do you do with it?

You use it to encourage lawlessness, to continue disorder and strife.

"I have brought men in here to protect my property. And protect it and me they will. And if anything happens, you, *you,* do you understand? will be responsible. You have all tried to ruin me. If I lose this strike, I am a ruined man. And I will not lose it. I swear I will not lose it."

The Dean rose to his feet with a snap. The seventy-odd years slipped away from his shoulders, and he towered over John Sargent, his whole form shaking with indignation at the contorted and monstrous charges that he had heard. But temper and voice were well in hand when he spoke.

"You talk of lawlessness and disorder, Mr. Sargent. In the name of truth, has there been a single lawless act, a wild word, that has not been directly, directly I say, incited by you? You brought these men here to-day, not to protect your property—it needed no protection. You brought them here for the one purpose, to provoke the strikers to a fight. You want one short, bloody conflict that you think will turn the older men against the strike.

"Your plan is clear. It is logical. But remember, there is just one name for that plan. And when you have made it and go to execute it you are outside the protection of all law.

"You talk of Socialism. Who, I ask you, who

brought the agitators here on Labor Day to incite riot and destruction? Who but you, by your own act, tried to provoke the crowd to violence?"

"I did that," said Sargent brazenly, "and I will do anything else, anything, I say, to save myself from ruin."

"Sir, you talk of ruin, loss of money to you, as though it were the end of the world. I saw your father, forty years ago, when you were a child, down there by the river, where your big turbine wheel is now, blowing his forge with his own arm. He did not have the money to buy his iron. He built the first of the machines that have made your fortune with his own hands, piece by piece. He had to give a lien on it for the materials. And do you tell me that he was not better off then, a richer man, than you to-day, with millions going through your hands?

"If you were ruined to-morrow would you ever feel the gnaw of hunger? Would a child of yours ever look up at you with starvation talking through its little cheek bones?

"Man, have you lost all measure of the worth of things? Do you not know that it is a greater thing in the sight of God and man that one child should go to bed hungry to-night in this town than that all your money should be taken from you?"

"Do you want me to feed them, and thus arm them against myself?" Sargent said harshly.

"They are not fighting you. The men are fighting for themselves, their right to live as free men. And the women and the children suffer—that is their part—that other women and children, to come, may not have to suffer as do they. Put aside all talk of Socialists and future and classes. Three thousand women and children went to their beds unfed this night, all to save you the loss of your toy, money!"

"I didn't make the condition," growled Sargent. "It's the fault of their men. Am I my brother's keeper?"

"In God's name!" said the Dean, swinging about, his face ablaze. "For your soul, do not say those words. Do you know who said them? Do you know?"

Sargent got to his feet. He was dazed by the pain and horror in the priest's voice.

"They're in your Bible, somewhere, I suppose. I don't know," he said slowly.

"They are the words that Cain muttered to God, when he had murdered his brother. And after that he said: *'I am accursed . . . Every man that findeth me shall slay me.'*"

The two men stood eye to eye, in silence, until John Sargent could stand it no longer. His eyes fell, and he stood nervously rubbing the backs of his clenched hands together.

Out of the stillness of the night, into the stillness of the room came the sound of a single shot.

It was a distant shot, but in the absolute si-

lence it spoke unnamed terror. For in it there was the ring of death.

"It has come!" the Dean groaned. "I feel it."

John Sargent reached for his hat and, without a word, hurried from the room and the house.

The Dean, almost mechanically, turned to his desk, reaching for the oil-stocks and stole. He did not remember his hat.

A few long, swift strides down the street brought him up with the shorter man ahead of him. Together they hurried down into State Street. Strange companions, with strangely different thoughts and motives, yet both impelled in the one direction by the same thing.

The effect of that single shot had been a thing to inspire awe. It showed how nervously and how little men rested in those nights. A little, sharp, staccato sound it had been; the bark of a sawed-off rifle. In an ordinary night not twenty people in the little city would have remembered hearing it. Now, at the sound of it men were hurrying out already from hallways and from the side streets, half-dressed, anxious, alert men. Hardly a word was spoken. Men saved their breath for—they knew not what.

It is a fearsome thing to see men troop together, out of nowhere, in silence, in the night; and to see how a common impulse, without prompting, leads them together and irresistibly to the point they seek. Does soul speak to soul, or is there a medium, more subtle than the air

with its sound waves, that carries vibrations of excited thought from mind to mind?

"Do you feel it?" said the Dean in a low tone to the man at his side. "The power of a thousand minds working on the one thing. I had rather face that crowd howling, with guns in their hands, than face them so, silent, with their naked hands."

Sargent said nothing.

Now as they got farther down the street and the crowd thickened so that progress was slower, a murmur came up over the heads of the crowd, meeting them.

It was a word, at first, a name, that ran leaping from lip to lip, one word—*Loyd.*

Then there were three words—*Loyd is killed;* words that seemed to paralyze the lips that passed them on. For a block or two there was nothing more: only the blanched faces and the angry breath of men and those three words—*Loyd is killed.*

Farther on, there were more words, confusing words, contradicting words. Men gasped and sweated to get them right—"Not *Jim* Loyd—not Jim—Harry—young brother—Harry Loyd, not Jim."

A crowd was coming now from the opposite direction. It was a procession that came on up the street. Men walked slowly, packed together, with bare heads. A useless ambulance tried to clang its way through the crowd. A

stalled trolley car stood helpless, shedding a pale, yellowish light about it. There was no going or moving for any.

But the word came clear now. In hurried, bated whispers, true; but plain, very plain.

Harry Loyd, Jim Loyd's young brother, had been up River Road. All the world could have told you that Harry had been spending the evening with Nonie Gaylor. The lad had walked whistling from Nonie's doorstep, to his death, in front of the main gate of the mill. Men, running at the shot, had found him there—dead as they reached him—lying, face down, in the middle of the paved roadway. The news was very explicit, now.

They had found the guards lined behind the barred gates, guns ready at every knot-hole.

From that packed body of men that moved with slow, shuffling step up the street there came a confused, rising murmur. A murmur that asked questions, but did not wait for answers. A murmur that rose and fell and rose again, ever a little higher. It was a murmur that told that the crowd was coming back from stupor and stunned unbelief. In another minute they would be hearing their own question, and looking for the answer.

Shrilly and swiftly the questions ran up and down the street, more swiftly than had run news before them. Shrilly the questions rose one above the other, as flame leaps above flame, un-

til men stood, at last, to listen: and to answer.

Of what use to kill John Sargent's hired guards? *They* had no interest in this matter. Of what good to burn the mill? Could the mill suffer?

One man is guilty! Where is he? He was seen to leave the mill to-night, came the answer. Did he go back to the mill? He did not. He is still in the town, then? On the street, maybe?

Some man will meet him: some man will put hands, maybe, upon John Sargent. What will that man do who puts hand on John Sargent? Hold him for the law? There is no law, for John Sargent.

What will that man do? He will kill John Sargent, with his hands. Kill—with his hands—with his hands—with his hands!

The cry rose shriller and shriller until it was no longer articulate. It was a whine: the whine of a wire in the tempest. But the meaning all men knew: the man who first puts hands on John Sargent shall kill him.

The Dean turned to the man who had been at his elbow. He was gone. The man never lived who was brave enough to face a thousand men, his fellows, each wishing to kill him with bare hands. It is a death no man can think of.

And, a few moments before, John Sargent had heard the words of Cain: *Every man that findeth me shall slay me.*

The Dean pushed down through the crowd to

meet the center of that body of packed men walking slow. Somehow they made way for him by the side of the mattress on which they carried the boy.

Jim Loyd had said: "I will bring him home so." And no man had dared to question.

Step by step, his white head showing all above the crowd, the priest walked behind Jim Loyd, who walked unseeing, unhearing, his hand lightly touching the shoulder of his dead brother. This had been his baby brother. He had carried him in his arms. And he had only left the four-year-old baby down to run for himself, when he himself, at twelve, had gone into John Sargent's mill, to get bread for them both.

"And, dear God!" the Dean breathed, "I said to that man: 'Jim Loyd always *pays* his debts!' How little a piece of the web of life do we see! And a word—what a word may mean!"

Slowly they came now up to the house, in a side street, where Jim Loyd lived.

When they had seen the door close upon its dead and its sorrow, men went back to the corner of the wide street. Their words were simple and elemental, as the talk of men is like to be when they have seen their dead.

They judged John Sargent there, without heat, without temper. He was guilty. The law could not reach him. He must die by the hands of one of them. It is a terrible thing when men in cool dispassion decide to kill.

When many men, a thousand men, so decree, it would seem that the object must die, withered by their very thought.

But when the judgment was passed, the whine of the scent rose again. It demanded to know where John Sargent had been seen—who had seen him. Men whispered that he had been with Father Driscoll.

Then the Dean, stepping upon a horse-block at the corner, in the full light of an arc lamp, spoke. They were not ready to listen. They thought they knew what he would say. But no man was ready to say that he had not the right.

"Murder," he said slowly, "has been done this night. God, He alone, knows what it may lead to.

"Murder, such as was done first by Cain. And do you know, do you remember, what Cain said to God when he was charged and judged? Do you remember?" His voice rang out to catch the farthest of the crowd. "He said, 'Every man that findeth me shall kill me.' You are saying, 'Let the first man who finds him kill him.'

"And what said the God Almighty of Justice and of Judgment?

"God said, 'Whosover killeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken upon him sevenfold. And a mark was put upon Cain, lest any man who found him should kill him.'

"And I say to you: 'A mark is set this night

upon John Sargent, so that no man shall kill him. He shall not die by your hands.'"

He stepped down from the stone and made his quiet way up the street toward the church.

Men looked after him—looked at each other—stood where they were, thinking.

CHAPTER IV

THE DEAN'S JOURNEY

THE Dean of Milton was slowly and a little painfully climbing the great ranks of steps leading up to the doors of the State Capitol. He had not been abed at all the night before, and his knees were stiff from the long down journey of the morning. Very early in the morning he had said his Mass for the repose of the soul of a boy whom he had seen carried home dead in the night. After the Mass Father Driscoll's prayer had turned, from the boy who had gone blithely, with clean hands, to his death, to the living men whom he had seen during that night.

He had seen them, boys and men whom he had known since babyhood, with murder in their eyes; boys and men whose little histories of schooling and working and living were so like each other, so many times repeated, so like the figures of a pattern, that he had often thought he could have read all by one: in a moment he had seen them turned into raging furies, who whined to kill.

For the time, he had held them back. Who could tell what instant that feeble leash of his

would break? Whose hand would hold them then?

In the simple, unblinking way of a boy, the old priest had reviewed the case, for the benefit of Omniscience. The men were hungry, their children were hungry, he explained. They were desperate. They had seen their brother dead. The powers that were sworn to protect them were turned against them. Dear God, give them grace of patience. Stay their hands. Give me grace of strength and wisdom to know what is best to do.

The Dean had risen from his knees and gone straight in to where the telephone hung in the lower hall of the house. Calling the telegraph office, he had dictated a telegram to the Governor of the State, asking for an interview at twelve that day.

The instant transition, from the eternal simplicity of his prayer to the up-to-the-minute practicality of his action, was characteristic of this old priest, as it is of the Catholic Church.

He had not waited for an answer to his message. There would not have been time. He knew that the Governor was in Albany, held there by a struggle in the closing days of a special session of the Legislature. So he had taken the early morning train from Milton, trusting to the urgency of his business to get him the few moments of the Governor's time that he would need.

Looking up at the great square block of the Capitol building as he toiled sturdily up the steps, he was reflecting what a great, blundering, helpless thing was this which men called the State. Here, this building was the outward symbol and the sign to which nine millions of people looked for such government as they had. Yet the building itself, one of the greatest and costliest ever built for any government in the world, was crumbling after only a few years. It had been honeycombed in its building by rapacity and inefficiency. The State which could not build even its own house with honesty and decency, had to presume to look after the interests of millions of men, any one of whom could have looked to the building of his own house with intelligence and thrift. Democracy, argued the Dean, thinks that its government is the aggregate of the intelligence of the individuals governed. It is not so; it does not rise to the average even of that intelligence.

The Governor was a Protestant, come of the old Protestant stock of our hill country, where there still lives more of old-time Protestant bitterness than, perhaps, in any other place in this country. But he was a direct man who really wished to know the man-to-man truth of the problems that confronted him. He knew Father Driscoll of Milton by repute, knew that from him he would get straight truth in short words, and he was unfeignedly glad to see him.

"It's that strike of yours up there, I suppose, Father," he said as he seated the old priest. "I wish you'd give me an outline of the whole business, at first hand. I've tried to watch it and I've had reports, of course, but you are on the ground."

"You know John Sargent, the owner of the Milton Machinery Company?" the Dean began, at the root of things. The Governor nodded shortly, and Father Driscoll went on:

"He owns not only the company but he owns Milton, man and boy, hand and foot. It is a situation that is not supposed to exist since feudal times. But that is not the point. It exists."

"Always so in a one-mill town," admitted the Governor, who knew his State.

"He let the strike go on peaceably," the Dean resumed, "for a matter of three months. It seemed that it had settled down to a mere question of endurance—his money and his capacity for losing money on the one side, and the capacity of the people for starvation on the other. Then he became desperate. I believe that competition was cutting the ground from under him in the markets, while his wheels stood idle. He came to Milton and took personal charge of his end of the strike. He found that the head and the soul of the strike was Jim Loyd."

"That's the Socialist, isn't it?" the Governor caught at the name.

"Well," the Dean considered, as if he had never before thought of the matter, "he works twenty hours a day in the cause of his fellow-workers who are idle, and through all those hours he curses bitterly the fact that he is held down to an equality with them. If you can make a Socialist out of that—"

"I only know," said the Governor, "that the Socialists cut down the Republican vote of Milton a thousand or so last Fall. When I asked the reason, the Committeeman said, 'Jim Loyd.'"

"It is likely," the Dean agreed. "The vote-cutting side of it would not occur to me."

"Now that is what I do not understand." The Governor was willing to digress, in spite of the fact that it was a very busy day and the other fact that a hundred senators and assemblymen were just at this moment holding up some of his pet measures. "Your Church opposes Socialism root and branch, is bound to, I believe; Socialism plans the end of you along with everything else, so far as one can gather; you preach against it officially and privately, I suppose; yet you never seem willing to come out and give any practical political help against it."

"Leo Thirteenth," said the old priest quietly, "did more to hold back the real dangers of Socialism than did all the political organizations of the nineteenth century."

"That may be, Father; I do not know the world question broadly enough to dispute it. I speak of matters as I see them right here at home. Your Church is, potentially, the greatest political force in the State. Socialism directs itself pretty squarely against you—for reasons which you must appreciate more fully than I do. Yet, practically, you do nothing."

"You mean," said the Dean slowly, "that we should use our influence to organize voters against Socialism?"

"Well, it's about the only effective way."

"From that," said the Dean, gazing at the ceiling, "it would be only one step to organizing them to vote for either the Democratic or Republican candidates."

The Governor held up his hands, laughing. "Don't do it," he appealed, "I'd be the last Republican governor of New York!"

"It might not work that way—I've a young assistant at home, Father Huetter, a Republican after your own heart, and I suspect he'd have more power than I. But, seriously, Governor, we are talking about the impossible. The business of the Catholic Church is with the souls of men. She has to do with them, not as Republicans or Democrats or as Socialists even, but as souls. Now her business with them concerns the Ten Commandments of God. Are they obsolete? Has our civilization become so

complex that there must be written ten new commandments to govern trusts and the division of labor and its products?

"You, in common with every other man who thinks beneath all this yeasty talk of to-day, know that there are social troubles and labor troubles for just one reason. That reason is that some man or set of men in a position to do so with impunity is breaking one of the laws of God against his fellow-men.

"You speak of 'solutions'; the Socialists want 'solutions'; every man who mounts a barrel to talk has a 'solution.' We know that there is one solution and only one. That is the law of moral justice between man and man or between one man and a thousand other men who may be in some way dependent upon him."

"That must be the business of the Church, then; the State cannot handle abstractions." The Governor was positive.

"Governor, there are no abstractions. The law of moral justice is written all across your statute books. Why is it not in force? The business of the Church is to educate the conscience and mold the heart of the people so that they see justice and wish it. When the people —who are the State—see justice and wish it, and yet it is not done, where is the fault? In the machinery of government, which does not respond to the will of the driver. Then the machinery must be changed. Now, there is more

Socialism than has been heard in this chamber for a long time, I believe."

"It does not respond," said the Governor, smiling. "I can attest that. I was elected to make a certain law. The senators and assemblymen out there were sent here to pass the same law. They are out there now squabbling each for himself, and I cannot get the law."

"I listened a while as I was coming in," said the Dean. "It sounded like the Athenians in the market-place: one saying one thing, another another thing. In the meanwhile my people are heart-sick and desperate and starving. God knows what is happening in Milton this minute."

"Forgive me," said the Governor. "I know you did not come all the way down here to hear my troubles. Just what is the situation?"

"Sargent tried to bribe Loyd," the Dean resumed promptly, "and at the same time tried to discredit him by spreading the report that he was ready to betray his fellows. Why Loyd did not kill him I do not know, for he is a man of violent and terrible temper.

"It came near to throwing the town into riot and utter lawlessness. Then before Loyd had gotten fully in command again, Sargent hired anarchists and agitators of every type to come into Milton on Labor Day to stir up bitterness. He even appeared in the street himself and kicked a dwarf, to provoke an attack upon himself."

"You saved his life that day, I've heard."

"Loyd would not have let him be hurt, anyway. That was the evening he wired you for troops, and I followed his message to you with one saying that there was no need. There was no need. But, yesterday Sargent had two hundred deputy sheriffs sworn in, roustabouts and hangers-on generally they are, I believe, and brought to Milton. Ostensibly they are there to protect his property, but their real business is to provoke the men to such a bloody conflict as will break the strike by frightening the more timid of them.

"Last night young Harry Loyd, Jim Loyd's young brother, was killed by these deputies as he was passing the mill gate."

"How?" said the Governor. "Was there no rioting, no attack on the mill?"

"The boy was alone," the Dean responded quietly, "walking whistling down the road from his girl. You heard otherwise this morning?"

"My report was confused," said the Governor, guardedly. "Go on, please, Father."

"There is no more. John Sargent stood at my side on the street last night and listened to thousands of men clamoring for his life. In the dark, he went away like a shadow. Whether he got back to the safety of the mill or left Milton on foot I do not know. No man in Milton would have dared give him conveyance, and he could not have boarded a train."

"Then you think Sargent is deliberately trying to bring on bloodshed. Doesn't he value his own life?"

"The workings of physical courage and physical cowardice are very peculiar, Governor. But that does not interest me. His life is no more important, except to himself, than was the life of the boy who died last night. Now I believe that John Sargent is morally responsible for the death of that boy. But legally, in the eyes of men, who killed Harry Loyd?"

"Why, Father, that would be hard to—"

"You did."

The old priest had spoken calmly, with the quiet emphasis of simple conviction. It struck the Governor harder than if he had been angrily denounced. He shrank back in his chair, throwing his arm before his face. For the space of a full minute the two men sat without a word, until the distant clanging of an elevator door seemed to rouse the Governor.

"Surely, Father," he said, gathering himself together, "you go too far. My position does not —you cannot throw responsibility upon a man like that. I did not even know that those deputies had been sworn."

"You know it now," said Father Driscoll relentlessly. "If another man be killed to-night, who, then, shall be responsible?"

"It comes back to the old thing," the Governor returned, smarting. "The machinery of

State. I cannot reach my hand from here to Milton to stop things."

"Governor, is it well to hang on that word 'machinery,' when murder, actual murder, is what we have to think of? Those two hundred deputies are the officers of the county. They are deputies of the sheriff. The sheriff is your deputy. They and he are virtually at your orders. Can you say that you are not responsible for their acts?

"But neither did I come here to charge you with this. It is bad enough in all conscience, without stopping to cavil as to where the blame lies. There is now just one important question. That is: Are you going to prevent bloodshed and suffering? Nothing else really matters just now."

"I do not see just what I can do. The State constitution hampers the executive in so many ways."

"But the State constitution does not hamper John Sargent. The 'machinery' of which we talk seems to respond beautifully to his will. He has but to use a little money, and he finds himself in direct command of an arm of the law. Finds that arm ready to do murder at his bidding.

"Can it be, Governor, that you do not realize the horror and the crime of it? Those deputies wear the badge of government. They, to my men, represent government, all that my

men see of government. The government, then, comes to kill them, peaceful, God-fearing men, every one as valuable to the State as you or I, and comes to kill them at the word of John Sargent, their enemy.

"A little while ago you wondered why the Catholic Church gave no practical help in holding back Socialism. In common reason, sir, tell me, how long do you think any government should last which can be so turned back against the lives of those who support it and make it possible? If it were not for the great balancing inertia of the millions of people such government could not continue over night. You know that."

"Yes. But the system of government exists. The executive must be the last to think of overturning it."

"I am not thinking, Governor, of the State nor of its system. I am thinking of three thousand men in Milton. They are my friends and my children. I baptize them, I marry them, I bury their dead. Protestant and Catholic alike give me respect, and, I hope, some love. I preach to them law and sufferance and patience. But how long may I continue to preach law to them, when the law turns rifles of murder against their breasts? How long shall I tell them to go on starving quietly and letting their children and their women starve, how long shall I preach patience to them, when the fruits of patience are death? Socialism! Socialism is not dangerous!

But murder is dangerous! And hunger is dangerous!"

The Governor was amazed. The quiet-spoken, priestly old gentleman had suddenly blazed forth into a fire of very human feeling.

"I do not know, Father," he said hesitatingly, "the power of the State is not to be put to use except as a last resort. The people do not like it."

"Governor, are you the man to stand with your hand at the helm of State, watching the winds of political chances? I do not believe you are that man. I cannot blame you for thinking of your own future, no. But when you were made Governor of this State the conduct of its government fell upon you alone, so far as your power goes. The first article of your oath as governor is to protect human life. That thing is concrete. There are no systems or confusing theories about it. I have shown you that human life is in danger, and *that* through the authority and complicity of the State itself, through you, in fine. Are you going to protect that life?"

"What do you think could be done?" The Governor did not say that he would accept the Dean's suggestion. Probably he was merely groping for a way out of the immediate position in which he found himself.

"Those two hundred deputies must be removed. You cannot, perhaps, force John Sar-

gent to send them away from Milton, but you must at least take from them the sanction and the authority of the State. So long as they wear your badge, you are responsible for them. It is unthinkable that our men should be at the mercy of these who hide behind the great power of the State. You must make Sheriff Beals discharge them."

"I can do that, maybe; but will that help matters practically? They will remain in Milton in the pay of Sargent and the result will be the same."

"Then you are bound by your oath to send troops there and prevent murder. It will be that."

"That is difficult, since I have given out your message of only a week ago, in which you said there was no need of soldiers. There were people, strong influences, urging me to send troops then. I refused to send them, on your representations. I do not see how I could explain my change of sentiment."

"I have explained mine," said the Dean quickly. "John Sargent has begun to kill men with deliberation."

"That is difficult to prove, Father. The affair of last night might have happened in so many ways."

"Governor, do you believe that I have given you a truthful and accurate account of the situation?"

"I do. Certainly, Father."

"And do you believe that John Sargent, no longer ago than last night practically admitted to me that he was going to do these very things?"

"I have your word, of course, Father. He must have been mad."

"He was telling me only what I already knew instinctively. And that was after he had lectured me on the dangers of Socialism."

"I see," said the Governor. Though just what it was that he saw was not entirely clear.

"You understand and believe what I have told you, then. The lives of men are in danger. You can save them. You will do it?"

"I must do it. I will do it. But I—it will cost me a great deal."

The two men fell into a short silence, while the Governor was counting the chances. Finally Father Driscoll said quietly:

"Governor, you know that I have never taken any active part in politics of any kind. But I have lived a long time, and I have seen the coming and the going of many men in public life. I have watched their careers. No man of them ever hurt his career by following plain duty. Compromise and weakness at critical moments are the things that sooner or later remove most men from a path to greatness. I am old and I have seen. Believe me."

"I know you are right, of course, Father, but—"

"No. Do not take it that I spoke from principle or religion. I spoke simply of sound politics. Any close student of our public life could tell you the same.

"But I am not a Fénelon. At times I am only a prosy old man, and every man must cut for himself the solid steps up the rock of his life.

"I am talking here, and I have not yet come to the real business of my day."

"Why, I thought we had settled—" The Governor began, a little nervously.

"I spoke to you of three thousand men in Milton. There are more than that number of women and children who have to be spoken of."

"What of them?"

"They are starving." The Dean put it simply, baldly.

"That is harder yet," said the Governor. "But nothing can be done. The men will not give in and go back to work."

"No. They will not give in. And the women and the children would rather starve than see them do so. Were you ever hungry, Governor?"

The Governor looked up quickly. Then, understanding, he shook his head slowly.

"No," he said slowly, "I never was. I don't know what it means."

"No more does any man who has not felt it. Nor does any man except the father himself know what it is to have a child weak with hunger

look up into his face and wonder why there is no food.

"Governor, this strike must be stopped. You must stop it."

"I?"

"There is no other man who can do it, except John Sargent, who will not do it."

"But I—I am not a Czar. I have no power over John Sargent. Nor have I any over the men. They would not go back to work, if I tried to drive them with soldiers. You know my limitations. You know the Governor can do nothing outside of an acute crisis; very little then."

"The crisis in Milton is the most acute that could possibly be imagined. There is bloodshed on the one hand and starvation on the other. By a simple act you can send the men back to work and put bread in the mouths of women and children. Will you do it?"

"I do not understand you at all, Father. There is nothing that I can do," said the Governor decisively.

"There is. And I think you will do it," the priest affirmed evenly. The Governor sat back and waited. He could not imagine what might be coming next. The Dean stretched his arm out across the corner of the desk and spoke slowly.

"The men would be eager to troop back to work at your word. You have only to send a few soldiers up there, two companies with one

good man in charge would be plenty; take charge of the mill and put in an office force. The river will run the mill. It does not need John Sargent's hand."

The Governor was dumfounded. The thing was unheard of. He struggled for speech, until a certain thought struck him. Then he exploded:

"Why! That's Socialism—confiscation! John Sargent would have me impeached!"

Father Driscoll leaned over the desk and said, a little grimly:

"Governor, I think you would rather not have said just those words: John Sargent would have you impeached. Remember that the other side of the picture is this: Men as good as you, and better than John Sargent, will be killed, and women and children will starve."

"I do not mean John Sargent exactly," said the Governor, flushing a little. "I mean his associates, the whole financial power of this State and of the Nation, the party which gave me office and to which I owe loyalty, all would condemn me."

"Sir," said the old priest sturdily, "you owe loyalty to the people of this State. *They* gave you office."

"But, it is Socialism. I do not believe in it."

"Governor, it is no more Socialism than it is Polygamy. It is common sense in a crisis. If there were a flood or a great fire, which might

not cause half the suffering of this strike, you would commandeer the whole resources of the State to restore normal conditions. You can do it here just as constitutionally, and with every right.

"You speak of impeachment. Would the Assembly dare to vote your impeachment in such a cause? They would not, and you are too good a politician not to know it. You know that the very attempt by the forces of which you speak to ruin you—and they might attempt it—would do the one thing for you that would make your life great. It would take your future out of the hands of organization and of party system and place it on the one foundation where the career and future of a great man is safe, in the heart, the great sound heart of the people."

The Governor was thinking rapidly, but he was not ready to speak. As a man, the words of the priest stirred him, brought him back to days when, first entering public life, he had vowed that nothing, no combination of forces or organization, should ever swerve him from the absolute right. He knew that there was a powerful truth in what the priest had said. He knew only too well that man's public life was really secure only in the understanding and trust of the people. But he knew that the step which the priest was urging was not one that would cut him off forever from the confidence of the men who had made the steps for him up to where he

stood. He knew that it was the right thing, that, probably, in the long run, it would be the great and the wise thing to do. But loyalty to the immediate party and to individuals is always a fetich to men in our public life, and he felt that it was too strong for him.

"I believe that you are right, Father," he said slowly. "But you do not know all that it means. You do not know the many lines that go into this net that we call the government of the State."

"In a crisis," said the priest sententiously, "where there is suffering and the lives of men are in danger, there is but one way to clear away lines and knots. Cut them."

"What you suggest, the solution that you see so clearly, may be used some day, perhaps before long. But I do not think the people are ready for it yet. Certainly, the party on whose platform I was elected did not anticipate any such thing from me. And, after all, our government is a government based upon party principles. I am a Republican, not a Socialist."

"Yes," returned the Dean, "it will come when, as with all compromises and half measures, it will be too late. You are afraid of the name Socialism. Are you more afraid of the name than of the thing?

"You call upon men," he went on, "to come to the aid of order and law, against Socialism. You are afraid of chaos. But do you realize

that Socialism gets ahead in this country for just one single reason? That reason is, what you have just been telling me: The hand of government cannot do right because it is tied by many knots. The man who, in your position or in the one position in this country that is greater than yours, will cut some of those knots, who will show the people that government is a thing of heart and hands and brains and not a thing of paper and tape, that man will be able to laugh Socialism out of the country."

"I am tempted," said the Governor, revealing a part of the vision that was flashing through his brain. "I believe that a man might build up the greatest career of the century on just what you say, Father—"

"I did not mean it that way, sir. Though you are right," the priest admitted, "and logical.

"I have but one thought in my mind. It is the thought of the minute. My people are in danger and they are starving. You can save them. It is the step that is at your foot. Will you take it?"

A secretary here ventured to interrupt. It was evident that the secretary had a very high idea of the importance of the business which waited outside, for he handed a card to the Governor and stood waiting, as if sure of an immediate response.

It was John Sargent's card, and the Governor,

a little annoyed that Sargent should seem to have such unceremonious entry to him, handed the card to Father Driscoll.

"Shall I have him come in?"

"My business is finished, Governor. I can say no more. It rests with your sense of duty," said the Dean, rising.

"No." The Governor detained him. "I wish you would stay, Father."

The Governor took a hasty command of the situation, as John Sargent strode brusquely into the room.

"Mr. Sargent," he said, "I presume that you are here on business about the strike in Milton. Father Driscoll is here upon the same business. It is very opportune that I should be able to hear at one sitting the two men most competent to discuss that situation."

Sargent stared shortly into the quiet face of the old priest and finally nodded to him. Then he turned sharply to the Governor.

"I have nothing to discuss here. I asked you for troops. You refused them, on the word of this man here. You were wrong. My mill was blown up by dynamite this morning. Loyd has been arrested. I do not know how many were in this. But I want troops there at once. I want force enough to arrest every striker in the town if necessary. You could have prevented this, Governor. Your weakness is responsible for it."

"A few moments ago," said the Governor curtly, "I was told that I was responsible for the killing of a man in Milton last night. Is that right? Was I responsible for young Harry Loyd's death?"

"There was rioting. It was his own fault."

Father Driscoll swung around indignantly in his chair, but, before he could speak, the Governor broke in:

"I do not believe that, Mr. Sargent; do you?" Sargent flushed darkly but the Governor did not wait for his answer. He turned to Father Driscoll, saying:

"Have you any suggestion, Father?"

"Only this," said the Dean, as though thinking slowly to himself: "I left Milton early this morning, but in broad daylight. The town was then quiet. There was no disorder of any kind. The mill gates were guarded and well patrolled. How could any man or men have entered there, in full daylight, and set dynamite? I should like to see the message which Mr. Sargent received apprising him of the affair. It would be interesting. Perhaps he has it with him."

The Governor turned quickly to Sargent.

"Have you it?"

"I have it," said Sargent, "and it came in private cipher. Even the telegraph company can't help you. No one sees my private business. I see what this priest means to infer."

"I do not, yet," said the Governor. "But be-

fore we speak of troops or anything else, will you read me that message?"

"I will not. This is not an inquisition."

"Mr. Sargent," said the Governor, rising, "I am rapidly coming to a certain decision. I did not think ten minutes ago that I should ever come to that decision. It is one that means the risk of my whole career. It probably involves a great deal to you. It may change the whole economic future of this State. In another minute I shall have arrived at that decision. Before I do—once more, will you give me that message"

"No."

The Governor paced the floor carefully three times. He gave more than the minute he had allowed. He turned and sat down at his desk with a certain finality. When he spoke it was in the voice of one announcing an ordinary intention.

"Mr. Sargent," he said, "the troops will go to Milton. The town and all in it will be placed under martial law. The soldiers will take charge of your mill. The men will go back to work the day after to-morrow, under the conditions prevailing before the strike. A force will start at once to take charge of your office. I would advise you not to interfere with them in any way. When you are ready to arbitrate your differences with the men I shall appoint a board, and raise the martial law."

John Sargent sat glaring. He had seen many governors. This one had suddenly gone mad; that was all.

Then a doubt struck him, and he leaped from his chair. He walked over to the Governor, shaking with anger and menace.

"You fool puppet," he shouted, "I almost believe you mean it!"

"I mean it so much that I am now calling my secretary to set it in motion," said the Governor, as he calmly touched a button.

"And how long do you think you'll be Governor after you attempt it?" roared Sargent, standing over him threateningly.

"I considered that an hour ago."

"Oh, you did, did you? With this man here? The two of you sworn to uphold law and the order of things, and you sat here plotting to ruin me and bring the curse of Socialism on the country."

"On the contrary," said the Governor lightly, "I had already refused to do this thing though Father Driscoll had pleaded for it. I am doing it now. Why? Well, say, because I do not like you. You see what little things sometimes change the course of destinies and States."

"A little thing will change the course of your lunacy," said Sargent grimly, as he turned to leave the room. "There is a man here in Albany who made you governor. He can unmake

you. There is an Assembly out there now that will impeach you."

The Governor turned to Father Driscoll and said with a smile:

"There, you see, Father, how the strokes of State are struck—and foozled," he added, just a little ruefully.

Father Driscoll rose, preparing to go, and said evenly:

"You have done right, the thing that lay to your hand to do. You will save the men, and give bread to the women and children. All the powers of privilege and interest and rapacity will hound you. You have measured the fight and counted the cost. And—and I do not think you are sorry. Your future is set on the right, and it is in the hand of God. No. I do not think you are sorry."

"No. I am not sorry," said the Governor, as he took the old priest's hand.

Then the Dean went slowly down the great ranks of steps before the Capitol.

CHAPTER V

THE WILL OF GOD

FATHER DRISCOLL on the long ride up the valley through the falling September afternoon and dusk sat wrapped in thought. Men who knew him by sight and others who knew only the Roman collar raised their hats as they passed, entering or leaving the car. The habit of a lifetime had made him careful never to slight the respectful courtesy of men. He had lived through a time when in this his country a Catholic priest received few enough of such courtesies. He responded ever affably, but, it must be admitted, a little mechanically to-day, for his mind refused to be drawn back from its business.

Although he was very tired, and the lines of age lay heavy down his face and across his shoulder-blades, he was not depressed. He was coming home from the capital of the State with a victory for his people. If he could not see the results of that victory—as who can see the ultimate consequences of any decisive step in this world?—he was at least sure that it was the best and the right thing for the moment. It would

tide his people over the desperate crisis. No more could be asked in a struggle such as theirs at Milton.

The little revealing by-plays of human nature, the happinesses, the disappointments, the excitement, the timidity, the boredom, the incidents that draw out the emotions, ever changeable and varied, of our people as they travel, went on at every station of the journey. But the Dean of Milton, unlike his usual self that was accustomed to look on all things with an open, if whimsical, eye and a heart of human understanding, was noting none of these things to-day.

His eyes fixed themselves to follow the ever-changing line of the hills of his life of love and work. Here a cliff stood up, almost from the edge of the track, its hard rock face bearing still the scratches of the crystal fingers of the glaciers. Beyond rolled up a ridge, born of the rifting and the belching of a far older time.

Often his soul had stood among them and said in its awe: "They are the handmarks of God—my hills!" But to-day his mind looked and said: "What are they?—Little wrinkles and tiny crowsfeet on the face of the earth." Yet each had its meaning. Every fold, each break in the line of the hills, told its own story of some blistering change that time or convulsion had brought about; and so, together, they pieced out to you the history of a world in the making.

What wrought it all? Where was the im-

pulse? Pressure from underneath; always pressure from below; power pent up and repressed, fighting its way to the surface, to freedom, to expression. Always this.

And the other world? The world of men. Always the same. Always the pressure from beneath: the pressure of the great, dumb, hungry many, fighting upward from beneath, fighting for room, for expression, for more food.

His mind skipped from the hills to the other side of the earth. He saw that great stream of the Aryan peoples, the course of which is the history of the Western World, starting from its source on the plains of western Asia. He saw them, a hungry folk, when mouths were many and pastures thin, pushing out from beneath and spreading to newer feeding grounds.

He saw the Celt, most restless and impatient of all the waves of men, sweep swiftly across the breadth of Europe, until he came to rest, for a time, on the rocks of Scotland and Ireland, sitting there with eye brooding out over the waters of the Western ocean, waiting for the impulse that should leap him over that broad barrier. Behind the Celt came the waves of Frank and Goth and the broken, many-crested waves of Teuton and of Slav, with Lett and Russ and grim Tartar waves crowding behind all.

Ever the same; the pressure of hunger and desire pushing up from below!

Now Celt and Teuton and all, with mighty,

straining leaps, had taken the barrier of the ocean and were running together and mingling, filling the valleys and lapping the high places of the New World. In a single century they had swept all across this continent.

Again the feeding-grounds are narrow and the mouths are many. Where now? And still ever that pressure from underneath.

But there is a difference. Formerly, elsewhere, the many were dumb. When hunger drove them they moved mutely out from under their governing classes, went to new places and there made themselves to be the governing classes. This was as it should be with waves; the bottom of one wave rolling up to make the top of the next.

Cæsar found that the Germans apportioned their lands to individuals freshly each year. One hundred and fifty years after Cæsar, Tacitus found that the allotments had become permanent. Private ownership of land practically existed. Here was the end of Nomadism, the beginning of Feudalism.

Towns grew up for one reason and another, but most often because men having skill to make things with tools found it better and safer to work together in certain localities. But since they stayed and worked in one place they could not go forth to gather their raw material. Other men must bring it to them. Nor could they go out to sell the product of their labors. Still

other men must buy it from them to peddle it to the users of it. These others who bought and sold became the Bourgeoisie, hated alike by dreamers and by workers; fattening, as some one said, from both ends of the workman's candle.

Government, greedy and needy, might sell oppressive laws to the Bourgeoisie, but the workman still owned his tools and his skill of eye and hand. These he might use or not use as he saw fit. Only the laws of supply and demand were his masters. And he had the Church and his Guild to protect him from open injustice.

Comes now the age of machinery. The workman's tools are taken from him. His power of arm and sureness of eye and cleverness for design are all supplanted. A roaring river or a coal mine takes the place of his strength of muscle. He is harnessed to a machine which he can only start and stop. The machine itself supplies the brains, skill, and precision which once distinguished the good workman from the poor one.

He is a piece of the machine, essential to it, as is every piece of steel or casting in it. And there are pieces in it which cost more than the workman's widow could get for his life.

Capital owns the machine with which the man must work—must work if he would eat. He may work only as Capital permits him to start the machine.

Up again comes the surge from the bottom:

the pressure of the hungry, unquiet many, straining under the weight of machinery and capital and fixed economic law.

But here the difference. The many have voices now. They do not now strive to break out from under the governing classes above them and move to other places. There is nowhere to go. They are not mute. They talk. And their talk has the simplicity of brute logic: We are many, they are few. Let us go up and fight them.

The many, under the machinery, know that, geographically, they must stay where they are. The classes which govern them and govern government do so because they have the machinery and capital. Let us, then, say the many, take the machinery, which we alone know how to use. Let us take the capital—it is made of profits from our labor—and make it work for all. We must move. Yes. But we move upward. We will be the governing class.

The Dean moved stiffly in his seat. The valley lay in misty darkness. The lamps of the train were lighted, but, as he looked, the last of the day still glinted along the tops and ridges of the hills.

History, he said to himself, has a way of fixing a day when something came to a head—some men were killed on a certain field, a paper was signed, a man was crowned, a republic was proclaimed—and announcing to us that the thing happened then and there. It did not. It was happening

a long time before and went on happening a long time after, in the heart of the people. That is where things happen. When will men—leaders, reformers, teachers—know that *there* is all good and all change?

The train came screeching on to the long bridge that crosses into Milton and the old priest gathered his great, wide frame up out of the seat. "James Driscoll," he said to himself with a queer little droop at the corners of his mouth, "you are a very wise man, a philosopher; you look at things with a great, broad view. Yet there is Jimmie Loyd up there in jail, unjustly, to-night and you care more for his little finger than you do for Magna Charta. That is queer. And you know of human hearts; I've heard you talk wisely of them. He is sitting there in his cell, thinking of his brother that had to die last night. Can you go up and tell him what his heart should feel?"

Father Huetter, solicitous and full of events, met him at the steps of the train.

"You must be dead, Dean," he grumbled, as he offered a young shoulder for the Dean's old hand. "You should never have made that journey down to Albany and back without a rest, especially after last night."

"I know, I know," the Dean admitted humbly enough. "But if I had not been there just when I was I should have accomplished nothing."

"How was that?" the young priest queried eagerly.

"When I had exhausted upon the Governor every argument that I knew, John Sargent, of all people, came in and, unwittingly, browbeat the Governor into a resolution to which I had not been able to persuade him. But what happened here?" Father Driscoll had heard in Albany, from the owner of the mill, the main facts of the day's occurrences in Milton; but he wanted to get the first-hand impressions of his assistant. By assuming complete ignorance he knew that he would get a fuller and better connected account.

"I was just at the 'last prayers,'" Father Huetter began, as they turned into State Street, "when the whole town was shaken by an explosion. It seemed to come from the direction of the mill, and, of course, I suppose every one in the town jumped to the same thought.

"Soon as I had the vestments off I hurried out and down the street, for it seemed sure that some one must have been hurt. The town was in the streets, of course, and some women and children were crying from fright, or perhaps just from overstrain of nerves."

"Stale tea leaves and hunger," said the Dean grimly.

"But the men," Father Huetter went on, "once they had heard that it was only one of the empty stock houses that had been blown up, and that no

one had been killed, seemed to take no interest whatever in the thing. It seemed ominous—as though they had been expecting some such thing, and were half disappointed with the littleness of the result. I could not see what to make out of it.

"Then I remembered all the excitement that they had been through during the last two weeks or so, and especially last night, and I thought I understood. They were sated with sensations and could not be roused any more.

"They commented to each other, quite freely and with no rancor whatever, that Sargent had blown up a cheap part of his own mill, in order to inflame the public against the strikers. There seemed to be not the slightest idea in any one's mind that one of their own number might be directly accused. When they did not kill John Sargent last night with their hands, as they wished to do, they seemed to think that any other revenge on him would be silly."

"What more?" questioned the Dean. He was very tired and also he was anxious for the rest of the day's work.

"Before the dust was fairly settled from the explosion," Father Huetter resumed quickly, "young Hilton, Sargent's secretary, with five or six of the deputies whom Sargent has here, went before Justice Baxter and swore out a warrant for Jim Loyd's arrest. It seems that one of the agitators who came here at the beginning of the

strike brought in a quantity of dynamite and some sparking apparatus for explosions. He swore that Loyd had taken these from him and then had him driven from the town. It seems to be true. Something like these was used in the explosion this morning."

"And Loyd went to jail quietly?"

"I never saw anything like it," broke out Father Huetter. "I was there, at his house, when they came for him. I had thought Jim Loyd a man absolutely without any fear or respect for the forms of law. I thought he was a man likely to die fighting on his own doorstep rather than go innocent to jail. They came heavily armed. He rose and nodded to them. His sister was beginning to cry wildly. He went and put his arm gently about her shoulder, telling her not to worry, that everything would be all right. Then he crossed over to where his brother's body lay and snatched the Crucifix from off the breast. My heart was in my mouth. What was he going to do? You know it's only a little while since I thought that he had lost all religion and hated God and Church and everything else.

"He looked steadily at the Crucifix. You could see his big shoulders shaking, with some emotion that I have no name for. Then he dropped the Crucifix slowly back upon the body, stooped swiftly and kissed his brother's forehead, turned, reached out a hand for the irons they had

ready, and walked quietly out with them. I guess I never knew the man," he concluded slowly.

"No man," said the Dean quietly, "knows any other man in this world. But what of the men? There was no fighting, no attempt to rescue him from the law?"

"A dozen times," answered the young priest, "on the way down State Street and over into Court Street the crowd gathered and could have swept his guards under foot. But he shouted and waved them back each time, and they obeyed. I say I do not understand it at all."

"No—" the Dean said reflectively. "But I fear there is more. I do not see the end."

Father Driscoll munched silently through a belated supper. Though he had eaten scarcely anything throughout the day, he had very little interest in the food before him. More than anything else in the world he wanted sleep, but there was in the back of his consciousness something telling him that he must not have it, that there were yet things to be done, that his day's work was not over.

Father Huetter had gone to lead the Office of the Holy Name Society by the side of the young Loyd's body. The Dean, settling himself down in his own room for Vespers and Complin, found that he could hardly force his mind out of the circle which it had been making all night and all day.

The little clock was striking nine as he arose and put down the book. He would go directly to bed. But he reached for his wide felt hat, called his ancient housekeeper to instruct her as to where Father Huetter might be found in case of an urgent sick-call, and, avoiding the patent disapproval of her eye, stepped quickly out to the street.

Milton was apparently settling down into its regular nightly quiet as the Dean crossed the upper part of State Street and took a darkened short cut over into Court Street. But to the Dean's taut-strung nerves the quiet was too heavy. It was unnatural; it brooded. True, one could reflect, men had stood on street corners now for the last four months, nearly, and talked of their strike and of the incidents and struggles and hopes of it, until you might suppose that they had said all the words that could be said about it. But the Dean was not convinced. The same sense of indefinable danger that had made him leave the house followed him through the quiet dark.

He passed the gaunt old figure of the court house, with its one great eye blinking out through the nearly naked branches of the maples, and turned the corner into Reynold Street where the squat, dark heap of the jail backed up against the rear of the county buildings. There was no light from the jail and the street was entirely deserted. The Dean had hardly expected this, for

he thought it likely that there would be some of the men standing about in front of the jail.

He stood a while, undecided. He could not go home without somehow trying to lay his finger on the pulse of this vague fear that followed him. A thin streak of light coming from behind a curtain of the warden's outer office drew him to step up and ring sharply.

A low excited murmur of voices from within followed his ring, and then a challenge.

"Father Driscoll," he answered quietly.

Fred Wheeler, the warden, pulled the door open for him, and as he walked in he was surprised to find John Beals, the sheriff, standing nervously in the middle of the room.

Beals, a political sheriff, had spent most of that day in unusual and uncomfortable proximity to a shotgun. He had been certain that some attempt would be made to free Loyd. In his state of mind, any intrusion, even that of the old priest, was a cause for alarm.

Father Driscoll apologized so profusely and assumed so blandly that he would be allowed to see Loyd that the sheriff, taken off his mental feet, did not know how to refuse.

Walking down the corridor of the jail, the warden said:

"I'm sorry, Father, but you know we wouldn't dare open a cell to-night, or I'd bring him out to the office to you."

"Perfectly right, Fred, I only want a minute with him."

Loyd was leaning like a great, loose-jointed animal on his arms which lay stretched along the heavy iron hinge-strap of his grating. In the electric light from a single bulb at the end of the corridor he recognized the priest, but he said nothing. Wheeler walked away.

"I have news for you, Jimmie," said the Dean, putting his hand through the bars to rest on Loyd's arm. "The Governor will send troops—they will be here to-morrow—and an overhead force to take charge of the mill. The men will go to work at once and operate the mill until Sargent gives in to arbitration."

"What did he say about my brother?" Loyd questioned fiercely, straightening himself so that his shock of black hair touched the ceiling of his cell.

"Why, Jimmie," the Dean fell back a little, "what could he say? He will investigate, I know, and try to see that the law is—"

"Law!" Loyd laughed frightfully. "There's no law. It's a lie! My innocent brother lies dead in my house, shot dead last night by an officer of the law. The man who shot him is walking around now ready to kill again. And the man who ordered the thing is away from here, but he can order other killings. Law! What is his law? The law of money and of

power and of murder. That's his law. It works for him just as I have worked for him. It makes him rich just as I have helped to make him rich. He took my boyhood and my chance in life. I had to give it so that my mother and my little brother could live. And now, with his law, he has taken the only thing that I loved—my brother. Why? Why, because I and thousands of other fools like me have worked for him and made him rich so that he could buy law and kill us with it when it suited him to do it.

"Haven't I worked and struggled and been abused all this summer trying to make the men starve quietly, when there was food about them that they might have had for the taking? Why? All so that John Sargent's law might be kept. All so that this law you talk about might be strong enough to keep me in jail to-night.

"And do you think I did not all the time know just what a fool I was? Did I not see that I was just welding the chains for myself? Doesn't every man see it that works at another man's machine and makes money for that other man? Doesn't he know that he is just giving that other man a grip on him? Doesn't he know that every dollar he grinds out of a machine for another man is a rivet in his own collar?

"Know it? We all know it. And yet we go on doing it. We go on, because our fathers went on, because good men, like you, because people,

because Church, because everything tells us to go on."

"But," the Dean put in quietly, "the Governor is ready to use the power of the State. He will do all that can be done."

"Can he give me back my brother's life? Can he give me back the years of my own life? Last night it was my brother. If John Sargent wanted me killed here in this jail to-night he could stage it and go free. You know it. The State knows it. The Governor knows it. What does he do?"

"Well, at least, he is ready to take the one step that will end the strike and put things back where they were."

"Yes. That's what he wants. That's what everybody wants; things back where they were. Back where we and our children—thank God, I'll never have one—may be worked over and over again, and shot in the end if it's needed. Why will he do this? And what will he do?

"Why? Will he do it because he cares for me or my kind? No. He'll do it because it's a big bold play that can one day make Gordon Fuller President of the United States. He's taking a chance—a big chance. But he's a big man, and he's willing to play. But that's what he's doing, playing—with the lives of men. For what? For Gordon Fuller."

"Even if it were true, Jim—and I think you

are mostly wrong—I have belief in that young man—it is the one thing to save the people and stop the strike."

"The strike is ended."

"What? How?" the Dean questioned eagerly. "What do you mean?"

"When I laid down the Crucifix on my brother's breast, and put out my hands for the 'bracelets,' the strike was over then."

"I do not understand, Jim." The Dean spoke wonderingly, but he had already begun to realize that the intangible fear that had taken him out of his house when he had not meant to come was founded on something real.

"The strike is ended," said Loyd again. "It will finish in a way that no other strike ever finished in this world.

"Do you think that after we have fought and starved as we have all this time that we are going back to work under the old conditions, to pile up more money for John Sargent, to make him stronger to fight and gouge us again? Do you think I left my dead brother's body to come here quietly and wait for John Sargent's law to send me to State's prison? No. I came at the time because this morning we were not ready to strike. Now we are ready. It is ten o'clock now. In a few minutes the men will come to break me out from here. We will go straight to the mill, blow in the gates, overpower Sargent's guards or kill them.

"In the morning we'll not only have the mill in our hands and be ready to run it, but we'll have every store and bank and public utility in the town.

"You don't understand yet. This is a one-mill town, a one-man town. The banks, the trolley cars, the business concessions belong to John Sargent. We made them for him. There are nearly four thousand of us. There are not four hundred able-bodied men in the town who do not belong to us. Who is to stop us doing what we wish?"

The Dean leaned back against the opposite wall of the corridor. He saw the monumental simplicity of the thing which Loyd had outlined. He knew how it would appeal to the daring imagination of the big, fearless man before him. And he did not doubt that he would go about it simply and literally, though death stood in the way. For a moment he was stupefied by the bold clearness of the idea. Then his mind leaped to the terrifying consequences. He saw all the great power of the whole State, roused by money and the fear of money, prepared to pour its forces down upon the little city. It would be *war!* And he knew that Loyd and the men would fight to the end.

"Jim," he gasped, "do you know what it would mean? It would mean civil war."

"It would mean *something,*" said Loyd shortly. "And that is more than all the Labor talk and

uplift and Socialism has meant yet or ever will mean unless men are willing to pay the price and take the risk for the thing they want."

"And can you say what is the price? Because life is bitter to you and because you would throw it away cheaply, do you dare to say what life is worth to other men? And are you ready to lead them to destruction?"

"What shall we do, then? Do you want us to settle down quietly to grind those lives out forever, to see our brothers murdered, to see ourselves sent to prison? Why don't you go farther and tell us to bow our head and say, 'It's the will of God; let us suffer and die peaceably'? No. Father, in spite of what you know and have heard of me, I love my Church and my Faith, but no church and no faith and no priest can tell me that it is the will of God that the children should go hungry because of John Sargent's greed, or that my brother should be killed by his hired murderers."

"No, it is not the will of God. It is the short-sighted wickedness of men."

"Then it has to be met in the one way that it can be met."

"Wickedness with wickedness, greed with greed, murder with more murder? No. Neither is that the will of God.

"But it is the will of God that men should meet the hard and terrible facts of life with a great and patient bravery. God knows it is not

in my heart to preach to you, when your own heart is desolate in its grief. What can I say? Has not my own old heart felt the rage of passion and the leaping flame of anger at the things that I have seen?"

"Yes, and that flame is going to lick up this whole country," said Loyd, gripping and shaking the bars of his cell door. "Am *I* the only man who is suffering? *I* haven't got a hungry kid chewing at the bed-sheet in his sleep. *I* am not raising a family of boys and girls to be thrown into the hopper of John Sargent's mill. But I'm not a wind-jamming Socialist either. I can do this thing to-night and I'm going to do it. It's a thing that's never been done before and it will light up this State and this country. What is my life? What are a few dozen lives, if they go to the wiping out of slavery in this country?"

"Anger piled on anger, Jimmie, wrong upon wrong, never made anything right in this world. You are thinking of a cause. You honestly believe that what you would do to-night would help to better things. And, in the end, it would, perhaps. But the strongest thought of all you have is that it would ruin John Sargent."

"Yes!" Loyd shouted, "I'd leave him without a dollar in the world. And if you were in my place you'd feel just as I do."

"And if I did? Would it be right? Let us leave it," said the Dean, dropping his voice, "to the boy that is at rest to-night—Harry, with his

fresh and laughing heart. Life was dearer to him, and sweeter, than to you or me. Leave it to him. Would he have you do this thing with anger and rancor in your heart? No. He would beg you on his knees to do the brave thing."

Loyd stiffened as though he had been struck.

"You think," the old priest went on calmly, "because you are ready to throw your life away or make yourself an outlaw to the world about you, that you are doing the courageous thing. He, even in his boy's wisdom, could have told you that there was a yet braver thing to do—to stay here and clear your name of this thing as you can easily do, and—obey the laws of God."

"They're not the laws of God. They're John Sargent's; they work for him."

"They *are* the laws of God, Jimmie—Ten of them. And John Sargent can no more break them with impunity than can you or I. You know that."

Loyd said nothing, but tapped significantly on the bars of the door.

"I see what you mean, Jim; but you know what I mean, too. Suffering there is. Injustice there is. Wrong there is. Why? Because a man is breaking the laws of God; breaking one of the Ten Commandments. Government, Politics, Socialism, Economics—blow the fog away and you find a man stealing, breaking God's law. Set up another system and you'll find other men

doing the same. And you would cure it all to-night by breaking more of those laws of God?

"Jimmie, Jimmie, can you not see that the lesson is longer and harder even than that?

"You say that you looked at the Crucifix this morning. What did you see? You saw a Man loving justice and hating iniquity. Every great and big man does that always. He saw injustice and wrong and suffering all about Him. Did He 'take the sword'? Did He take the 'twelve legions of angels' to right these things? No. He took the other way, the way that leads not over the bodies of men but through the ways of their hearts.

"Can you bring anything out of force and riot and bloodshed except the things that you put into them—anger and hate and the desire for revenge? They breed each other.

"There is one way, the patient, the big, the enduring way. The law, in the hands of the Governor, will be helping you to-morrow. Nine millions of people, the sovereigns of the State, are with you at heart. Keeping the law of God—fight, work, teach, and vote. But keep the law of God. For every law that is broken, whether in the name of Labor or of Capital, of Socialism or of Private Right, a heavy toll is taken. And it is taken off the *weak.*"

Loyd strained uneasily along the bars, but still he said nothing.

"James." said the Dean after a little pause,

"you are here accused of something you did not do. That has happened and might happen to any man. But if you go out of here to-night, you, who have never broken any law, will be branded as a jail-breaker. Will it do any good to the cause for which you are ready to die if you go marked as an outlaw? Will it? It will not. And you shall not do it. I can stop you and I will."

"How?"

A heavy thud and a grinding, tearing crash shook the building.

"There they are now," said Loyd. "They did as I told them. There was no warning. They are in the office by now."

The Dean hurried down through the corridor to the office. He swung open the door between the inner and the outer offices, and stopped short.

On the floor of the outer office lay the heavy street door. On top of it lay the long iron tongue of a reaper. It was plain that the men had run up stealthily and rammed the door down with a single blow of the tongue and had leaped into the room after it.

A dozen or fifteen had crowded in and were half-way across the room. There they stood, for the moment, saying nothing.

Along one wall of the office four deputies were ranged, with rifles pointing dead at the group of men. At the Dean's left hand stood Wheeler and the sheriff, with their shotguns also trained

upon the men. But the sheriff gave no word to fire. The Dean at first sight thought that Beals was merely stupid with freight. But a second look at the men in front showed something else.

Andrew Tinney and Joe Kolakouvski, two giant molders, were in front. Behind them, his squat, double-jointed body screened by their long legs, was little Joe Page, the town dwarf, who had once been kicked by John Sargent.

In one hand the dwarf held a stick of dynamite with a common fire-cracker fuse taped into it. In the other he had a little stick of burning punk. The crude simplicity of the thing made it just so much more terrible. Any boy could have thought of it.

No man was ready to pull a trigger. The situation was too obvious to anyone who knew the character of the little half-man who held those things in his hands. Only one shot would ever be fired.

"Bring Loyd out, Beals," said Tinney. "Or give over the keys."

"The keys," said Kolakouvski, glowering down the eye of the sheriff's gun.

Beals stood, futilely holding his gun at aim. He seemed unable to do more.

"Give them to me," whispered the Dean at his ear—"the keys; they will not try to take them from me."

The sheriff, still pointing his gun wildly, reached for the keys that hung at Wheeler's belt

and passed them over to the Dean. The act was purely mechanical. The man's hand merely followed the first suggestion that his mind had been able to answer.

The Dean beckoned the group of men and it moved across the room, still screening the dwarf who padded along steadily, holding his two hands wide apart.

Quietly and without opposition the crowd followed the priest through the inner office and down the corridor.

The Dean worked quickly, trying one key after another in the lock of Loyd's door, talking as he worked.

"Jimmie, when I have found the right key," he said, pulling out one key and inserting another, "you will be free to go out and begin the work you have in mind. You will be free of everything except the law of God. I cannot free you from that. I am freeing you from this law of man. You will not be breaking jail. The door will be standing open for you. I am taking this all upon myself. I will answer for all of this to the law.

"When you go out from here, if you do wrong, if you break a law of God, if you kill, then I shall be as guilty as you. The sin that is yours will be upon my soul.

"These men will do nothing without you. All rests on you: life and death; shame, terror, and innocent blood. And on me it rests.

"Will you stay and take the long way in patience and courage and hope, or will you—there, the door is open at last—will you take the short way to ruin and wrong? You take me with you either way."

He pushed the door open and Loyd stepped upon the threshold. In the light, the two men eyed each other, breathing hard, for a full minute.

Then Loyd looked down the corridor into the puzzled, wondering faces of the men crowding there. He looked again at the old man whom he had all his life revered and loved. His eyes dropped. His big shoulders fell. And, swinging on his heel, he turned back into the cell and dropped heavily upon his bunk.

CHAPTER VI

"GOD LIVES"

"WHAT a curiously single-minded thing a crowd of people is anyway," John Sargent remarked casually, to the world in general. He was standing at the window of his private office in the plant of the Milton Machinery Company, looking down at Harry Loyd's funeral procession as it took its slow way past the mill and up the River Road to the hills and the Catholic cemetery. His secretary was standing a little back of him, looking over his shoulder; but as the remark was not addressed particularly to him he did not volunteer any comment.

"Just now that crowd is engaged in the business of mourning. They wouldn't turn aside from that for any other business in the world. If you could get his attention long enough, any one of them would tell you with a curse that I was responsible for that boy's death. Yet if they knew that I was up here in this window, they wouldn't turn away from their morning's work of mourning, even to shake a fist at me.

"And they have to stage a pageant. They couldn't get expression for their grief any other

way. Why do they have to go back to primitive things the moment they are in earnest about anything? I don't mind the Poles. They probably saw things like that when they were growing up in the old country. And the Italians just naturally fall into procession, for the sake of the thing. But two-thirds of those people are Irish-Americans of the second or third generation. They never saw anything like that. They're more sophisticated, with their talk and their reading and Socialism and all, than the average Yankee American. If anything, they're more American than he is. Yet there they are, giving that boy just such a funeral as an Irish martyr would have had six generations ago.

"They never saw it done; but you see they know how. That's why they never really change. At bottom they're the most powerful conservative force in the world. Their minds change and their talk changes, but their atavistic instincts never. And they are really governed by those.

"I guess I won't need you, after all," he said, switching abruptly to Hilton, the secretary. "You needn't wait."

Hilton started almost guiltily. He had not been listening to what Sargent had been saying. He had lately been interesting himself in the idea of thought transference or control—the influence which many minds thinking the same thought may have upon the mind of one person

upon whom their thought is fixed. He firmly believed that a number of minds thinking one thought about a given person would make that person come to think the same thing about himself. He considered the four or five thousand people passing by, all thinking John Sargent a murderer. And yet their thought seemed to take no effect upon his employer's mind. He was brought back so sharply by Sargent's dismissal that for an instant he was not sure that he had not spoken his thought aloud. But he caught himself and turned hastily to the door.

Sargent still stood looking out of the window.

"Yes," he said, "they are a wonder. They'll never change. They're always Irish and Catholic. And you never can tell whether it's the Catholic in them that keeps them Irish, or the Irish in them that keeps them Catholic. If they lose one they lose both, generally. And then, well, then they're nothing, they don't count.

"Take the old priest trudging at the head of them there. He's wider awake, he sees farther ahead in the problems of to-day, than any man I know. But you could set him back three hundred years and he'd go right along with the picture just the same.

"He'll talk at the cemetery, probably. I wonder what he will have to say about me. Most likely not a word. He'll just ding-dong away at the old 'dust to dust' and resurrection business. Yet if he'd take a fling at the bloodthirsty

money-power, he could have three-column leads in the New York papers to-morrow. But he won't. He'll just stick to his business of burying a body and promising Heaven to a soul. And they're just like him. I could go up there and stand among them and they wouldn't notice me: because they're engaged in the single business of burying a man."

It was, indeed, an unusual and striking procession, this which John Sargent reviewed and reflected upon.

A funeral in Milton, where practically all the men and a great many women were due to punch a time-clock at a certain hour every weekday morning of their lives, was generally a lonely-looking matter; reduced, as it must be, to the few carriages of those who were absolutely bound to go.

This was different. It did not belong to the relatives of Harry Loyd to say what his funeral should be. He had died not merely as Harry Loyd, but as a victim. Any one of the four thousand men and boys who now followed his body might have been chosen, by accident and John Sargent's guards, for slaughter. So it was as though death had taken a man or boy out of every family of them all.

On their shoulders men carried the body all the weary length of the way. Not a wheel was allowed to stir in that part of the town where it should pass. So silent was the crowd as it

moved down the street that the rattle of beads slipping through hard hands could be heard by those on the sidewalks.

A regiment of State troops had just put the town under martial law and were stationing themselves at different points to enforce that law. These soldiers had come to try an experiment which the men in the procession, as labor men, had all their lives been clamoring for. Yet the men did not raise an eye to look at the soldiers. As Sargent had remarked, they had but one business in hand.

Harry Loyd had been killed, as every man believed, by the orders of John Sargent. Jim Loyd, the man who had held them together, and had made such a strike as theirs possible, and had somehow fed them such food as they had had for months, Jim Loyd was in jail, through John Sargent's contrivance. But no man raised his head to look at John Sargent's window.

Protestants there were, men of every faith, and men of no faith, who walked silent and bowed in that march, and did not know what was upon them. The great spiritualizing, visualizing power of Catholic faith, which strips death of its sentimentality and shows it for what it is, the one elemental fact with which men have to deal, was at work upon these people. It was showing them and pressing into their hearts the eternal lesson of the littleness of a regiment of soldiers, of Jim Loyd in jail, or of John Sargent

in his mill, compared with the dignity of young Harry Loyd in death.

John Sargent, like most of our men large enough to live in the glare of daily newspaper discussion, had nothing but contempt for criticism for or against himself. It never reached him. If the Angel had come to him with the Book of Doom and shown him the record he had gained in that quarter, he would have answered that all men who do things in the world are blamed, naturally.

Here, however, was a great crowd of men and women whom he, John Sargent, had been feeding all their lives. They had been so reared that they had always had to consider him the most important man in the world. No government, no power could exercise over their lives a force so compelling, for happiness or for suffering, as could he with a single word. For, really, nothing was important to them except a pay envelope. Good government or bad, heat or cold, flood or drought—all these could be dealt with if the envelope were right. A word from John Sargent could at any time make a man or a family reasonably content and happy. A word from him could plunge a man or a family or the whole of the little city into want and misery. It was not exactly the ancient unanswering kingly power of life and death; but it sometimes amounted to that, in effect, and was certainly as near to it as any man may come in this day. To

all intents, John Sargent was the lord and master of everybody in that long line of men.

And they walked past him and his mill, giving no thought to him or it. He could not understand that. If they had turned, as they passed, and cursed him, he could have explained it: "Things went that way in the world." But that they could ignore him, could put him out of their minds, was not to be understood.

They were intent upon a matter in which he certainly was concerned, and they forgot him. It was—disconcerting, that that great crowd could be so heart-and-soul intent upon the burying of a mere boy as to forget John Sargent. It disturbed him. It seemed to cheapen his power over them. And it was a lonesome business, too, watching this crowd that had forgotten him. He seemed to be the only man in the town who was not in the procession.

No—there was another man who should have been in that procession and who was not there—Jim Loyd. He was in jail. And there was another whom Sargent missed, a girl. He would have known her by sight, for he had often seen her. She had charge of one of the big rooms of the twine mill down at the lower end of the works. She had worked there since her childhood. Gaylor—that was her name, he remembered. Harry Loyd had spoken to her just a few minutes before dying. Sargent found himself wondering what the young fellow had said.

He shook himself, left the window, and sat down discontentedly at his desk.

"What a world of mawkish sentiment," he grumbled, "is wasted on last words and relics and things. The fellow just said some fool thing and—stepped off into the dark. And she'll frame those words in her heart. Fifty years from now she'll still be taking them down and dusting them and weeping over them.

"This is a lonesome business. I believe I'll go and see Loyd. He's not a cheerful brute, but, at least, he'd curse me with some show of interest.

"I wonder why I can't help liking that fellow. He hates me; always did hate me. And now, if it wasn't for his religion, he'd execute me with his two big hands, for the murder of his brother.

"Now that's what I want to know. The Church or the religion or the superstition—whatever it is—that can hold Jim Loyd's hands off my throat ought to be able to hold the world. Why can't it? And why doesn't it?"

The wonder of which Sargent had spoken to himself, that these people in whose lives he was so large a factor should be able to put him so completely out of mind at such a time, must always be unexplainable to the outsider. These people were just a crowd of Catholic men and women, saying their prayers, simply and without any self-consciousness, for the soul of a boy who had gone to his death without warning. The things, remote and immediate, leading up to his

death were, to them, important in their way. The fact that any one, or that many, of themselves might have fallen in the same way; that, too, was important. But the one thing that put all other things aside was that the boy had gone without a sacrament.

Every man's own problem, whether of work or worry or danger, fades to a very small significance in the Catholic mind when placed beside the idea of a soul's going before God unshriven. The thought revolts the whole nature of the Catholic.

The foundation, in human nature, of the same thought terrifies every man in the world when he thinks of dying. But only the Catholic knows what it really means. The Protestant, the Pagan, if he prays, asks not to die without a loving hand to support his head and to close his eyes. It is the only sacrament of love and forgiveness and blessing that he knows about. Whatever he may call it, his soul cringes in the fear of dying unblessed.

From Father Driscoll, walking at the head of the coffin, to the last Catholic child, trailing away at the end of the procession, every soul was awed and absorbed in that one idea—that a life should thus be snatched out of the world. Harry Loyd, as a part of life; as a man who had been deliberately murdered or had been killed by the accidental discharge of a gun in the hands of one of John

Sargent's guards, could be forgotten for the time.

The Catholic mind, trained as it is and steeped in the Mysteries, the mind that is illumined, for instance, to sense the Real Presence under the veil of bread, looks naturally through the attendant wrappings of death, sees the body tragedy for what it is, but *knows* that the soul experience is the reality. This is why—and the outsider is never able to understand it—a crowd of Catholics can walk the street and pray as unaffectedly as if each were kneeling alone in the dark. It is not mysticism in any usual sense. It is not mysticism at all. Your Catholic is the veriest realist of all the world. But the *real* for him has infinitely wider meaning than it has for his neighbors. That is the difference.

Jane Loyd knelt alone at the head of the coffin when it had come to rest over the grave. So she had walked alone all the way from her home to the church and from the church here. Her grief was her own. She was in every way the sister of the big, grim man who had now for four months been the body and soul of the strike in Milton—Jim Loyd, who was now in jail accused, falsely, as all knew, of having conspired to blow up John Sargent's mill. She was a tall, tense-faced, dark girl, as like her elder brother as a woman is ever like a man. Neither of them had ever thought

of depending upon any one in the world for anything. The young brother, Harry, had been her care since the time when Jim Loyd had been big enough to go to work in John Sargent's mill.

The mill had taken the years of her own girlhood and turned them into a mere succession of gray, slavish days, which began and ended with the punching of a clock. The mill had taken her father. The mill had taken this brother, her baby, from her. The mill and John Sargent, under the name of law, had, in the very hour of her speechless grief, taken her big brother from her side. But none of these things had place in her mind. They were the mere marks and hedgings of life, some of them inevitable, some of them the patent sins of men.

The reality was in following the soul of the merry-eyed young brother—as she had so many times followed the ways of his busy little feet—up the high, dim path, to God. She had business there. She had explanations to make. Certain things must be made clear. God should know that the boy had not had the best of chances. Many times she had been tired at night and had not seen that he learned his Catechism. She was hard sometimes, she explained; it was not always easy for her to be merry and laugh with him; and he had always thought that life was a laugh and a whistle and a little dance-step. He was careless sometimes; but God must understand that it was not that the boy did not care.

He did care. But he forgot, sometimes; all boys forget. She had not been able to give him what a mother could have given. His mother, she was in Heaven, she could tell God of the things that Jane had not known how to give. Or Mary, the great Mother of all; *she* would know about these things; *she* could tell.

Dean Driscoll, during the months while his people had been engaged in a life-and-death struggle in their strike against the Milton Machinery Company and John Sargent, had often seen cause for deep worry in the spread among them of the talk and reading of Socialism. It was not that he feared the direct effect of the arguments of Socialism upon or against the Catholic faith of his people. Certainly he did not believe that Socialism as a doctrine, religious or unreligious, would ever greatly interfere with the faith of those he called his own Irish. He had lived a long time, and had some very well-established convictions. One of these was that an Irishman, of however many generations removed from Ireland, if he ever loses his Catholic faith (Father Driscoll had his private doubts of this ever happening), he loses it, not because he has found something that suits him better—he simply loses it, without ever expecting anything to take its place.

Father Huetter, educated in continental Europe, and having charge of the Italians and

Poles, took the matter differently. He argued with his men by the book, tooth and nail, night and day, against the propaganda of Socialism. The Dean, loving the restless fire of ardor in his young assistant, and knowing that Father Huetter understood the habits of mind and the former environments of these peoples as he himself could never hope to do, approved heartily.

With his own, the people whom he understood, he rarely argued. He scarcely ever mentioned Socialism by name in the pulpit. He did not think that the names that things were called by or the stringing of arguments would have any real effect, one way or the other, with his kind of people.

For Socialism as a distinct political entity he saw no future whatever. He saw that wherever representative government existed in the world there was but one line of cleavage. That line ran—roughly and brokenly, of course, but always effectively—between those who wished to go forward and those who wished to hold back. Liberal and conservative, he said, was the only lasting division of men. There was no room in any country for more than these two parties. The party that moved faster would sooner or later—sooner, perhaps, than any one imagined—absorb whatever was popular and economically sound in Socialism. What was left would then be negligible.

He had no concern about the outward work-

ings of Socialism. But he feared the hardening false realism which, under the name of ideals, deifies the full stomach. He distrusted the reasoning which makes a demigod of the man who labors with his hands, and which at the same time curses labor as essentially evil. He read his Genesis differently. He did not believe that *the sweat of thy face* was a curse.

He knew his people; he lived intimately in their ideas and aspirations. He knew that hard labor conditions were brutalizing and stunting to moral and spiritual growth. But a constant preachment that never raised men's eyes higher than their stomachs, *that* was brutalizing, too.

He did not believe that a hungry or an overworked or an underpaid man was more spiritual than a well-fed, physically contented one. The gnawing of want is not good for any soul. But he knew that the insistent demand for more and ever more was turning the minds of men forever upon the things of the body, wherein their happiness could not and must not altogether lie.

When he looked into their faces now, however, as they rose from their knees and gently crowded up more closely round him, his fear was lifted. Hunger he saw in those faces, and the results of hunger. Lines he saw upon them, which months of scanty feeding and haunting fears and worries had scraped deep. But beneath the lines and in the depths of their eyes he saw shining the light of unbounded confidence in God, the sure-

ness and the strength of His nearness. They had gone into the far places following the soul of the boy whom all had loved. They had talked with God, each in his own way; and you could see that each man had been understood.

The Dean, seeing and understanding, scarcely dared open his lips. What was there to be said? *God lives!* All else is little. This they had already seen, each for himself.

While the great crowd had been pouring out of the church and the still greater crowd that had not been able to get into the church was forming itself into order for the march to the cemetery, the coffin had halted a moment in the street. A girl in a quiet gray dress had crowded, gently as a ghost, into the ranks of men about the coffin, until she was near enough to put out a slim, work-hardened, little hand and pat the black box. Then she had slipped away unobtrusively as she had come. No one had noticed her. She was merely the girl whom Harry Loyd had loved and who had promised to be his wife. So she had no place in the procession. Their engagement had been their own secret, though the kindly housetops could have told all there was to know about it.

They would have been married by now; but the strike had swept away all the savings on which they had been going to begin life; for both, trusting to life and health and love, had given

unstintingly to those who had had no savings.

If John Sargent had really wished to know what Harry Loyd had said last, before he had "stepped off into the dark," he could probably have found out. The boy had said:

"We'll have to wait a long time now, I guess, Nonie. But if you're willing, you're worth waiting for; and old John W. Wait himself has nothing on me."

So Nonie Gaylor had no place to walk in the procession.

She stole away through the crowd, hiding herself as best she could.

The bell tolled out its measured gloom, and there did not seem to be any place where she could hide away from the sound of it. Then she remembered a man who, too, would wish to run from the sound of it, but who could not run. He had to stay where he was.

It was a bold thing to do, bolder perhaps than to have walked openly beside Jane Loyd in the funeral. But Jim Loyd was the only person in the world who would not pity her to-day. And pity she could not meet. Jim Loyd would be too busy with his own grief and fury to think of her. She would go and see him.

Warden Wheeler, with a lot of unspoken words just back of his lips, seated the girl in the inner office of the jail and went to bring Loyd.

She had always been afraid of Jim Loyd, the big, impatient man, with the chained fires that

danced in his bold, black eyes. She had never had more than a short word from him.

But when he came now, alone, and she saw the naked, seared misery of his face, she knew that she would never again be able to fear him. A man who could suffer like that would never be feared by a woman.

It was not that he was broken or shrunken. He was as big and grim and strong-looking as ever. But the fires of his eyes had turned to burn inward, as though they raged upon his very soul. And there was no light in the face, only the blank gray of ashes over a bed of coals.

When she had looked once her own revolt was stilled, and, as is the way of women ever, her own sorrow welled up into a flood of mothering tenderness.

Loyd saw the look leap into her face, the look of all the mothers of earth. And he stood ashamed, so that the color came creeping back into his face. This slender, motherless girl who had lost all there was for her in the world, before she had even had it, was still strong enough and brave enough to carry pity to him!

"Why did you come here, child?" he said at last. "This place is not good for you to-day."

"I could not walk in the street," she returned slowly. "People would be looking and pitying. There was no place for me. I could not stand it. I touched his coffin with my hand and ran away

—ran away," she repeated softly, as though it explained something.

Loyd understood and his quick heart was touched to the depths, even as it had not been touched by his own grief and suffering. Jane would not have understood. It had always been difficult for Jane to understand that any one but herself could be anything to Harry. And if she had understood—what could she have said? What could any one say? Where was there a word out of all the words that men have made that could be an answer to the pitiful question in this girl's eyes? "Why?" "Why?" they were saying. God had the answer hidden.

They sat a while in silence, neither of them thinking. There was nothing to be thought about. Then Loyd suddenly said:

"Nonie, did you say your prayers?"

She looked up startled, as though he had broken in upon some secret. Then she broke out:

"I didn't! I didn't! I didn't say a prayer or cry a tear since—since—I sent a prayer after him down the road. And the answer was a shot!"

"Steady, steady, little girl. I haven't said a prayer either. Couldn't we—couldn't we try it now?"

She looked at him for a long moment. Then she buried her face in her hands and the great relieving sobs of youth came crowding up into

her throat. Loyd had found the best word for her.

When she had quieted a little, she went fumbling in the little bag that hung from her wrist and found her beads. And, Loyd supporting and steadying her, these two, so far apart and different in everything, walked up and down the floor of that strange place, telling between them the Way from Gethsemane to Calvary.

So John Sargent, knocking and quickly stepping into the room, found them.

Loyd turned fiercely. Out of the few moments of peace and heart's ease, the first that he had found in many days, all the brute ravaging forces of his wild temper sprang with tenfold fury. Was this man to haunt him forever, to follow him down even into the secret place of his soul and mock him? There he stood now. Why not end it? Only a table stood in the way.

Sargent sat down quietly at the table. He was not consciously doing the right thing, the safe thing. He merely wanted to think.

These two had undoubtedly been saying their prayers. Now, just at the moment, he could not think of any two people who had less reason to pray, or who would be less likely to be found praying.

He admitted that he did not understand it.

Nonie Gaylor was the first to speak.

"Mr. Sargent," she said, "why have you come here? You had no right to come. If you have

come to laugh at Mr. Loyd, God will laugh at you."

Now there it was again. God had laughed at *her*—for no apparent good reason—had just playfully flicked the untasted cup of life away from her lips. And yet she looked confidently back up to Him, for justice. But Sargent did not confide to her any of these reflections.

"My girl," he answered, "if I told you the truth you wouldn't believe it. I'm not sure that I'd believe it myself. I rarely tell the truth—it's so useless, and wasteful.

"Sit down, Loyd," he said, turning in his chair. "You can't lay a hand on me while I'm sitting down. You simply couldn't. We both know it."

Quivering in every limb, Loyd sat down weakly. In the face of John Sargent's balking coolness his passions had burned themselves out.

"No," Sargent continued, "I didn't come here to jeer. I wasn't in the mood for it this morning. As I said, I'm not going to tell you the truth about why I did come, for I'm not sure myself. But, now that I'm here, there's a proposition in my mind. I'm going to show it to you, Loyd; and if you can't see reason in it, maybe this girl here can."

Loyd sat staring dully, his mind going round in a caged circle.

"You have heard," Sargent went on, squaring his elbows on the table, "what the Governor and

the State troops are doing and expecting to do here. The town is under martial law already. Before night they will take possession of my mill and attempt to run it, under martial law. They can run it. The men will go back to work tomorrow and the wheels will turn round—the river will do that much. But where are they going to get money for as much as a single pay-roll? There is no stock to be sold. And if there were, there is not a bank in the country that would dare advance a dollar on it. They have no materials. The steel interests of the country are bigger than Governor Gordon Fuller and all the governors in the nation. They wouldn't sell him or the manager he sends here a pound of steel if it would save his life.

"The men will go back to work at the old conditions and worse, and when they have marked time for a week and find that there's no money for them, where will things be then?

"Now if you will call this strike off at once I will put up my notices granting all the demands you made in the beginning, and a five per cent. increase."

"You said you did not expect to be believed," said Loyd. "What's the truth?"

"I did say that, didn't I? Well, it won't do any good, but I'll break my rule for once. This is the truth. This plan of the Governor's to confiscate my property and make me arbitrate with you, is going to fail. It's bound to fail because

capital will hold together in its own interest, and the Governor will not be able to get the money to run it. Your old priest here gave the Governor the idea, but, as would happen with a spiritual-minded man, he forgot to tell him where the money was to be got. But the thing is possible. If it is given a try now and fails for lack of money, some other governor, or a president, maybe, will try it—and remember to procure the money beforehand. Then it will succeed.

"Once it does, private property might as well not exist in this country. There will come a seven-year plague of carpetbagging government officials who, at the first sign of labor trouble, will camp on and practically confiscate every man's plant. It will bring on a reign of graft and incompetence and mischief that will ruin the country. When it is over, labor will find itself back where it was twenty years ago, not biting the hand that feeds it as it is to-day—but begging, begging, I tell you, for *anything* to do.

"I am right. And I'm telling you the truth. Will you do as I say?"

Loyd shook his head slowly. He could not see through all of the argument. But he was not trying. He was not interested in it.

"No," he said. "Your proposition is no good to me. I had a better one last night and I gave it up."

"What was it?"

"To go out of here where you have put me—

the door was open—and with the four thousand men at my command take for our own your mill and your three banks here—that would have given us the money you say the Governor lacks—and your stores and trolley cars."

"Every mother's son of you would have been shot down," exclaimed Sargent.

"I'm not so sure. The militia is not so ready to kill as your guards are." Sargent flushed suddenly and Nonie Gaylor shuddered.

"We might have lost," Loyd went on. "We might have won. We might have forced a compromise. But whether we lost or won or what, we would have taken care to ruin you. That was the only part I was really interested in. Then the future of labor or capital wouldn't have bothered you. You'd have shot yourself. The cowards of your class always do that. It's easier than living on your own merits."

Sargent winced and pressed the tips of his fingers down hard on the table. It was the echo of a thought that had sometimes come to him on gloomy, neurotic nights. Some men said it was the only proper way, when debts could not be paid. He himself had once said—speaking of another man who had failed ignominiously and dragged friends down with him—that the shortest way out was the best. But Loyd's blunt way of putting it was too much. He gathered himself, and asked:

"Why didn't you go through with this excellent plan of yours?"

"A good man, who loved me, stopped me. I don't know whether I'm glad or not. Anyway, he stopped me."

"The priest again, I suppose," mused Sargent. "It strikes me that I'm piling up a high score with that old gentleman."

"I saw him save your life once," said Loyd.

"I remember that. And now he has saved my property. It only remains for him to save my soul."

"Don't jest, Mr. Sargent," pleaded Nonie; "it's too horrible."

"My girl, I'm a long way from jesting."

He sat looking straight ahead of him for some minutes. But he did not give any account of what he saw. Finally he said:

"The man who shot Harry Loyd did it either by accident or in a sudden fright. Those men had my orders *not* to shoot. They were there to provoke and to be shot at.

"My class, as you call it in your Socialist lingo, has always to use the law. Why should it not? It pays for law and makes government possible.

"Now comes this young Governor, turning upside down the Constitution of the State. In the end it will debauch and demoralize government. It will hurt my class. But it will bring years of

suffering and misery upon yours. You can reach out and stop it. Will you do it?"

"No. The Governor's plan can have its trial. I don't believe much in it, for I know what you can do with money. But, Mr. Sargent, believe me, you'd better help him with both hands. For when his plan fails, it will be time to try mine."

"Miss Gaylor," said Sargent, turning, "can't you tell this man that he is crazy; that all he really wants is his own headlong way to ruin us all!"

"I do not understand anything about it, Mr. Sargent," Nonie answered in a dead, leaden voice. "It is all talk to me. I do not understand it, I suppose, because I am ignorant. I went into your mill when I was just past thirteen. I have been there running winders for you ever since. It's only seven years, but it might as well be seven thousand.

"Two years ago they put me in charge of that room. In that time they say that I have nearly doubled the earning capacity of that room. I do not know what that means. It never meant anything to me. I suppose it means that I know how to make other girls waste less and work harder and faster than any one could ever make them do before. I don't know why I did it. I don't want to see them work any faster or harder than they have to. But I go on pushing them always. I don't do it for you. I wouldn't care if you were losing money.

"And I suppose I'll go right on. I don't know why. For the right to live? I never much cared to live, except for Harry Loyd. Now—I suppose I'll go on just the same.

"No. I don't think the women who work in your mill care much, or that they're much afraid of Socialism or any other change that could come. They don't know what it would mean. And they can't think that it would be any worse. We go on, I think, because, somehow, we keep on believing that God is still alive. I don't know any more than that."

Then John Sargent got up and went away.

Out in the street, he reflected: "Now it would be interesting to know what those two people were praying for. *He* wouldn't ask for anything. And *she* doesn't hope for anything. Yet—yet—I don't know. I don't understand."

CHAPTER VII

THE REV. DOCTOR HILLIARD

"WHY, Dean, the delusion is as old as the race of men. Ever since one man began to work for another, government, in some form, has been trying to come between them to keep one from gouging the other. It has never succeeded, and it never will; because the price of labor is simply the wages for which a man is obliged to work. If he did not have to work he would not work at all, at any price. If the employer could get help for nothing he would not give any wages. There is only one question, and it is its own answer—How acutely does one need what the other has?

"Even Moses when he struck the rock did not expect the water to run uphill."

The Rev. Doctor Hilliard was a teacher of Sociology and Economics in the University. He had been up in the hill country gathering data on the subject of abandoned farms, which he proposed to use in a book dealing with the causes and effects of the movement of our people toward the cities. He had stopped over the night with Dean Driscoll and Father Huetter

in Milton, and he was much interested in the experiment which the Governor and the State forces had inaugurated in the strike situation there.

To him, the action of the Governor in taking charge of the Milton Machinery Company's plant and putting the men back to work under martial law was heresy, rank, headless, baseless. It broke the first canon of economic law, the law of supply and demand.

The habit of the lecture-room never quite fell from the Doctor's shoulders, and now, launched into a subject on which he could give chapter and verse, he was cathedral in his pronouncements.

The Dean appeared to be only mildly interested. He himself had asked the Governor to take the steps that had been taken, because he believed it to be the only way to save his people from starvation and crime. He had a deep reverence for the glories of the University; but where his people were concerned he would have traded the intellectual approval of the entire faculty for a few carloads of potatoes.

Father Huetter, however, was bursting with indignant argumentation in defense of the Dean. But the Doctor was not to be waylaid.

"It is the same foolish old attempt," he orated, "that has been made everywhere, to rule economic forces by politics and sentiment. It cannot be done and everybody knows that it cannot; but government goes right on trying it.

Wherever there is trouble the cry rises that government must do something. Government knows that it can do nothing, but it has to make some show of busying itself. Government can no more divide the tides of want and plenty than it can level the tides of the sea. Both tides follow fixed laws. Depression and scarcity follow overproduction and waste, as surely as ebb follows flow."

"And has your Economics," broke in Father Huetter, "taken all this time to find out only that? Has it no preventive, or not even a remedy to offer?"

"There is no remedy," returned the Doctor didactically, "and certainly no preventive, for inherent conditions. Production—business, you call it—has long periods of work when it is feverishly turning out more than the world really needs. Capital and Labor then need each other. Capital, during this time, is prudent. It piles up resources which it knows it will need in the time when markets become over-fed. Labor, during the good time, is confident, fatuous. It takes no heed. It accumulates nothing. When the period of depression comes, Labor suffers. It is inevitable."

"But," said Father Huetter, "it is hardly possible for the laborer to accumulate anything, even at the best. His family grows up about him. He is bound to give them the best he can at all times."

"There is just where the social fallacies of the country come in to disturb the economic balance. Who is to say what is the best for the family of a workingman, and that his family must have that best always at the cost of everything that he can earn? Two families live side by side in neighboring houses. Their supporters work side by side at the same machines. Each family knows to a penny what the other receives. Yet each family spends its life trying to deceive the other and to impress the other with the idea that it can spend more than the other. They pay for this by suffering, when the demand for labor ceases."

"But Labor does not receive its due share of the profits of prosperity."

"Would it make any real difference if Labor were to receive fifty per cent., a hundred per cent., more of the profits than it does? Would not the race of family and social competition still go on? When a man ceases to earn, does it make any difference whether he has been receiving, and spending, five thousand a year or five hundred? I think not.

"Your Socialist harks back to the time when there were no machines, no concentration of Labor in factories, when every man had his own bit of land or his own tools to work with. Was not the summer's fecundity followed by the winter's blast, then as now?

"Did not the time come, then as now, when

the workman found no more demand for the work of his tools? It did. But, in that day, the man was more provident. He had the sense of individual responsibility. He realized that the winter, the time of unproductiveness, was coming, and that it was his business to look forward to that time.

"To-day he is willing to shift that responsibility from himself to the shoulders of organized industry. He forgets that he is an individual, a head of family, a provider; and he goes on heedlessly living, hand to mouth, on what the machine daily grinds out for him.

"When Capital sees the dull time coming, it begins to retrench, to cut down things here and there. Labor, seeing nothing in this but injustice and greed, decides to strike—to teach Capital a lesson. Labor is doing just what Capital expected and wished it to do. Capital had already decided to stop work for a while.

"Then Labor, unready and beginning to suffer, cries out against the oppressor. Government—the fetish of the improvident and the thoughtless—government must do something!

"But what? Can government wave a hand and create a demand for goods with which the markets of the country are already oversupplied? Government is not a magician. It is, at best, only a sleepy-eyed policeman. It is absolutely powerless in the face of economic laws, in the making of which it had no hand."

"It is all clear—very clear," said Father Huetter. "But the people were starving."

"Oh, not that," the Doctor assured them largely, "it never comes to that. There is always relief. Your city authorities, your county authorities—no one really *has* to be hungry in this country."

"Authorities?" Father Huetter fairly snapped at the word. "Do you realize, Doctor, that every official of this town is a creation of the Milton Machinery Company, of John Sargent; and it is the same in Mohawk County? Do you think that our men or women could take begrudged charity relief from them? If you know anything of the character of our people, you know that they would starve first."

"But, why? Why should these things be so? Do not your people elect their own officials? The machinery of election is always in the hands of the majority. They are the majority. No one can interfere with them in their sacred right of suffrage!"

"Live in a one-mill town, and say that!" said Father Huetter shortly. "We are getting away from the point. The people were in want, acute want. I know families whose tables have not seen a piece of meat for over two months. Would it interest them if you told them that they had been breaking economic laws by not saving during the good times of the last two or three years? Do you think that they have not per-

haps guessed something like that for themselves?

"Last night I was called to a boy twelve years old. He had been thrown off a moving train of coal-cars. He had jumped the train up near the cross-over of the O. & W. He had a small bag which he was going to fill with coal and throw off as the train passed near his house. He had the bag nearly filled when a brakeman came along over the cars. He threw the bag off before the man reached him, and, in the scuffle, the boy either fell or was thrown off on his head. They thought his neck was broken.

"As soon as he was revived, he whispered to his smaller brother, telling him where the coal was and that he should go and fetch it home. When the little fellow went to look, the coal was gone. You see, somebody else needed the coal too. The neighbors brought in wood enough for the boy's mother to heat water for the doctor. And the cold weather has not yet come," he added gloomily.

These lawless details, however, had no place in the Reverend Doctor's large view of things. They were the necessary accompaniments of economic misunderstanding everywhere. They proved nothing but what he had been saying, that laboring people working in large communities were beeome improvident; that they could not, of course, be prepared for a long period of idleness. During the long, busy times they forgot;

they would not make the sacrifices necessary to gather a surplus which would tide them over the coming period of reaction. They could not be made to believe that the time of scarcity would inevitably come. They were the victims of their own irresponsibility, their false sense of security.

"There is something, however," the Doctor went on, stepping lightly over Father Huetter's irrelevance, "something that even our government, unwieldly and irresponsive as it is, might do. It has been done by Germany, with marked success. And England has done it. Those governments have, to be sure, an unhampered central executive power which ours does not possess. Still, a great deal might be done here.

"It is this. The country is very large. One section of it scarcely knows what another section is doing. There is always an enormous waste of Capital and of Labor, resulting from the fact that in many parts of the country employers are calling for help and cannot get it, whilst in other places men are idle. Government should know this; it should regulate it. There should be a real bureau of employment which would see to the distribution of laboring men throughout the country to the places where they are needed. They should be moved freely to wherever there is a market for them."

"But, my dear Doctor," said the Dean, turning at last, "my people are not Gypsies. They live here. They have their right to live here.

They have their families and their little homes here. They have put down their roots here. Is civilization such a failure that they must rove from hunting-ground to hunting-ground, from pasture to pasture? Might they not as well go back at once, then, to tribal life?"

"The same economic conditions and the same economic laws exist now as did then. All must bow to them," said the Doctor positively.

"That answer would do very well," returned the Dean, "were it not for three things: first, the same economic conditions do not exist; second, the same economic laws are not in force; third, nobody will bow to them."

This was too point-blank for the Doctor. It was discouraging. He would have to go all over the ground again. But he was a patient man and just. The Dean was old; his mind was affected by the nearness of his people's trouble; and, above all, he had not read the proper authorities. He must be taught as a beginner.

"Surely, Dean," the Doctor began, on the firmest ground, "you are ready to admit that the prosperity of your town and its people and the good of the whole valley depend upon the mill here being allowed to develop itself in the best way, up to its fullest capacity."

"Yes," agreed the Dean.

"And only the mill-owner can do that—"

"Who is the mill-owner?" the Dean queried.

"Why, the company, the corporation, I sup-

pose, headed by Mr. Sargent. Is that not right?"

"I do not know," said the old priest, measuring a long forearm carefully along the edge of his desk. "I do not know, I have never been able to settle it in my mind. I am going to lay the question before you, for an expert opinion."

The old priest sat back marshaling the points of the case into order.

"Thirty-seven years ago last spring," he began, "Milton Sargent, John Sargent's father, was down there by the river at a little forge, hammering out a plow by hand. He was a bright, clever workman, but a lazy man by nature. One warm day an idea came to him. It would be far easier to have a dam built in the river and a wheel put in that would drive his hammer and blow his bellows.

"He went to the small farmers about here and talked to them. Michael Gallagher, the great-grandfather of the boy that Father Huetter told you about a minute ago, lent him the first hundred dollars that he, Sargent, ever saw. I tell you he could talk money out of a feather tick. Everybody lent him money.

"He came to me. I called my trustees. We had a little money that we had gathered to start a church some time. We would not be ready to use the money for three or four years, maybe. We could see that Sargent's mill was bound to make money, plenty of it. The woods were be-

ing cut down broadcast. The farmers were pushing up into the hill lands, and there was already a heavy demand for farming machinery. We could not lose. We would get our money back, and double, before we should ever need it.

"I was a young man in that day. Naturally, I knew a great deal more of the world than I do now. We turned in to Sargent all the money we had, three hundred dollars. Every one who had money did the same. He got the water rights from the State and the two townships here for little or nothing. The farmers and woodsmen turned in and hauled logs and rock for the dam and the mill.

"Just as the mill was finished and the machinery on the way here, Milton Sargent failed. The blow struck heavy, for the dollars came grudgingly out of the hillsides in those days. But the country was new and the people were young. They did not mourn long. In their first anger they chased Milton Sargent out of the countryside. Then they turned back to look at the mill, standing gaping there, and at the water running idly over the dam. All they said was 'Sargent's Folly,' and they went back to their work.

"The property—dam, water rights, and all—was put up for sale by the sheriff. Milton Sargent's sister brought it for a trifle of the money that had been put up, at a fixed sale. The firms that had furnished the machinery got the money,

for theirs were the only claims that were properly secured. As I said, we were young in that day.

"My poor old father came up here about that time, to look me over. He found what I had done with the church fund. He turned straight round, went back to Albany, and got three hundred dollars. Dear knows where. He was back in five days and put the money in my hand, with a look in his eye that I have never forgotten. I believe it was the lasting sorrow of that honest man's life that he could not, out of respect for the clergy, flog me as I deserved. God rest him! I hope I got the lesson, anyhow.

"To get back—Milton Sargent appeared quietly in the mill that belonged, nominally, to his sister. He started the machinery and set men to work, the very men whose money had paid for the machines. To-day the physical valuation of the property, on the assessor's rolls, is one million, three hundred thousand dollars. It could not be bought for four times that sum.

"I hope I don't tire you?"

Father Huetter, who had never heard the whole of this history, begged for more. But Doctor Hilliard maintained a judicial patience. Already he could scent the heresy to which the Dean was working, but he merely nodded to him to go on.

"My difficulty has always been this," the Dean summed up. "On that May morning when Mil-

ton Sargent got his idea, he did not have ten dollars to his name. From that day to the day he died he never did a tap of work that would produce a cent. His sister had no money to put in. No one of the Sargent name ever put a thing into that property except nerve and the knowledge of how to use other people's money and work and brains. In common justice, then, who is the owner of that mill? I do not know. Do you?"

"The system of civilization under which we live," the Doctor pronounced, "judges that it belongs to John Sargent. If others, under that system, lost their rights, through their own gross carelessness, who is to be blamed? The system?

"If the system is wrong, it should be changed. But so long as it is the law of the land it must be held sacred."

"I had that answer," said the Dean, "from an old justice of the peace, thirty-seven years ago. I thought maybe something might have been learned since."

"I see what you mean, Dean," the Doctor admitted patiently. "You are trying to say that because the Sargents have used the people to build up their great plant here, therefore the plant should belong to the people. Every Socialist, from Karl Marx down to Allan Benson, could quote you miles of figures and statistics of unearned profits to prove the same thing. But it is not sound. The facts, the law, and even the equity, are all on the other side.

"As for the facts. Where would Milton be to-day, if the elder Sargent had not had the brains and the shrewdness to develop it? It was Jangen's Ford then, and it would be Jangen's Ford to-day, or worse. Where would be your fine little city and your schools and your grand churches? Your great water-power would, perhaps, be running a one-horse grist-mill employing two men and a boy.

"The law. You know how that is.

"The equity. You say that your people have given the Sargents a fortune. That is true. But has not that fortune, except the very small percentage which the Sargents have spent, come right back into the mill here. For what? Has it not come back to give more and more people a better living than they would have had otherwise? Do not your own native people here have a better life, a more social one, with more advantages, than they could ever work out for themselves on the farms? The fact that they will not stay on the farms proves it. And is it not a blessing and a godsend for the people whom Father Huetter attends to be able to come here and find abundant work for their hands, at wages they never dreamed of at home. Who made, and who still makes, all this possible? The Sargent money."

"Yes," Father Huetter said bitingly. "It is a noble blessing. Last year I signed age certificates for more than a hundred little girls, in

order that they might go to work for John Sargent the moment they were fourteen. The State compels them to go to school twenty weeks of the year. They can work the other thirty-two. And I signed as many more for girls of sixteen, so that they could work all the year. Father Driscoll signed as many for your Irish-American girls.

"Now if those little girls were growing up in Ireland or in Italy or in Poland or Hungary, they would have to work some, too. But the conditions would be as different as day from night. Over there, they would be working with their own, helping their fathers and their brothers. They would be out in the fields; they would be out in God's air and sunshine, filling out their frames and strengthening their lungs. The sun and the wind would be driving up into their cheeks the strong pulses of peasant blood, the life of the race.

"Here, you can see them hurrying, shivering and half-nourished, through the dark of an early morning drizzle, to shut themselves into John Sargent's mill. There they stand all day long at machines, their nerves forever on a rack; for a false move, a careless dropping of a hand, a loose strand of hair, may drag them into one of those machines, to death or mutilation. They stand all day, in damp clothes, gasping steam and twine dust, and coughing away their weak-

ened lungs. Yes. Theirs is a glorious heritage of freedom! And who will pay?

"This purse-proud, flamboyant young nation —boasting of how much it can afford to waste, and still beat the world—it will pay! It will pay in the weakness and the degeneracy of untold generations to come.

"Did you ever, Doctor, in all your readings of Sociology, in civilization or in savagery, come across a time and place where the young females of the race were herded out to destruction in this way? Why, there was never a tribe so savage or so besotted as not to know that, if it would live, it must above all other things guard the health and vitality of its girls.

"And do you think that the fathers and mothers here do not know this same thing? They do. But the grind of living, the race for mere existence is so close that the young ones have to be driven out to help."

"But," objected the Doctor, "there is no real need for all this. In the majority of cases the children—if there were real economy in the homes—would not *have* to go out. Most often it is the children themselves who want more than their parents can give, and they insist on going out to work. The girls want to dress and the boys want money to spend for themselves. It is the same race, the competition with each other, to outshine each other, that drives them so hard."

"Some of that might be true with the boys," Father Huetter admitted. "They are sometimes willing to get out of school. But it is not so with the girls. They do not want to leave school. They want the dresses, yes. But they know what they are doing when they have to leave school. Never imagine that they don't. They know, the old-eyed little women, wise before their time; they know that when they have to leave before high school, they are giving up a girl's best part of the race in life—education, refinement, social acquaintance. They know what they are doing, when they give it all up and drop into the blunting, stupefying round of John Sargent's treadmill. But the reason is a stronger one than dress.

"These little girls have been hampered and held back in their school work by other babies clamoring up behind them. They have to give their time and their little strength, which they should have had for study, to these others. And, just as soon as the law lets them, they have to drop the babies and hurry out to earn for them.

"There is more than that. Many a little girl has to leave school and give up her own pitiful chance in life because there is another baby coming into the family. An unborn mouth is crying. Would it surprise you if—before she is working in the mill very long—that little girl

should begin to question just why that particular baby *had* to be born?

"That question is to-day the hardest of all the hard ones that the confessor has to answer. And, under the force of example around, and the force of this terrible battle of the poor for life, it is every day getting harder and harder to answer."

"But you are getting away from—"

"I am not." Father Huetter, apparently, had not yet begun to fight. "I am getting away from nothing. I am getting to the vital, underlying things, the real things, the things that make this struggle of ours a terrible one—one that threatens State and nation, that threatens the lives of rich and poor, and one that threatens the Church of Christ!

"You say the poor should be willing to live more economically, and save when they are earning. Does that touch the question? They do not save. They cannot save. And who shall tell them that they must save? Who shall forbid them to snatch what little they can out of life as it rushes by them? To-morrow John Sargent's mill may kill them. You students and lawgivers announce your verdict, place the blame, and go back to your books. Have you changed anything?

"The Dean appeals to the Governor: 'My people are starving and desperate. If you do

not give them work and food they will kill and be killed. Put them to work somehow, what matters how? Tide them over this crisis and they will get on, until the next crisis.' He is right. He does the thing of the hour—to save the life and prevent the suffering of the hour."

"It is a makeshift," urged the Doctor; "an experiment, foredoomed to futility."

"You are academic," Father Huetter swept on; "he is expedient. Neither comes near the root of the trouble.

"He, because Milton has been his life and his work, does not look farther than this town and this one struggle. You, because there is a strike, and because it is only at the time of strikes that you hear the noise of the grinding of human lives, you think that these are the only times when people suffer.

"I tell you this struggle is going on forever, day and night, in every mill town of this whole country. In a town like this, where one man owns or controls every money-making thing in it, the struggle becomes bitter, personal, murderous.

"And everywhere, where a man pushes tired legs under a scanty table, where men talk together, and even where women haggle over the price of chuck and soup-bones, an idea is working.

"Did you read the last report of the United

States Commissioner of Commerce and Labor?"

"I did," said the Doctor.

"What percentage, according to that report, of the earnings of industry comes back to the laborer in the form of wages?"

"Seventeen to twenty-one per cent.," the Doctor quoted.

"Averaging less than one-fifth, then," said Father Huetter. "And what part does the labor element contribute in actual production? Just what does the work of the men employed amount to?"

"Well, it varies in the different industries." Doctor Hilliard considered. "It rarely goes below fifty per cent., and in some industries goes as high as sixty-five."

"Very good. The rest is credited to interest on investment; to a high salary to the owner, as manager; to power and light, and so on; to selling and distributing expenses; to such incidental charges as legislation and campaign contributions. It covers everything, in fact, except the work of the men. Is that correct?"

"Practically. It covers everything except wear and deterioration of machinery. And since old machinery is generally replaced by improved machinery, which increases the output or lessens costs, that item almost balances itself."

"So," said Father Huetter, "we can strip it down to this—the laborer, with his bare hands

and intelligence, earns fifty or sixty dollars. He gets seventeen to twenty-one. Why does he not get fifty?"

"Money is money," the Doctor answered cryptically. "Power is power. The owner can get men to earn fifty for him by paying them seventeen. He does it. Do you expect him to do otherwise?"

"No."

"Then," said the Doctor conclusively, "we are back where I began: Capital pays what it has to; Labor gets what it can."

"Just where I wanted to get," Father Huetter agreed. "You admit, then, that the economic law, which you set up as the Grand Poohbah, is not a law at all, but just an accident of our system by which the strong and resourceful one can force the weak and resourceless many to give him two-thirds of their earnings."

"The law—like our whole civilization—rests on private ownership." The Doctor was undisturbed.

"And when, in view of the Dean's story, did old Milton Sargent cease to be a thieving bankrupt and become a private owner? He had nothing in the beginning. He produced nothing that he did not acquire by trickery and an accidental weakness in our criminal law. Just at what point in the progress of this mill did Milton Sargent or his son become divinely appointed owner of anything? It was fraud and trickery

in the beginning. It was fraud and coercion in the process to-day. Does your law and does our civilization rest on that?"

"But," said the Doctor wearily, "must we go all over the whole matter again?"

"No," said Father Huetter quickly, "it doesn't make a whistle of difference whether we go over it again, or whether we never went over it. We have merely talked an evening out on something that we know nothing at all about and that we're not interested in."

"Why, my dear young sir," exclaimed the Doctor, reddening, "I have spent my whole life in—"

"I know, I know, Doctor," said Father Huetter quickly, smiling a disarming apology. "Never think that we outer barbarians of mill towns and hill towns do not know and appreciate your work. No man in America stands higher.

"What I was trying to say was this—you talk and think and write profoundly on the subject, from study and theory. I talk, more or less loosely, from observation of the things that come under my eye. The Dean, here, does not talk at all, because he thinks he can trust us to say it all, and more. We are all interested, to be sure.

"But what is the measure of our interest compared to the interest of the men who live and fight and work their lives out under the problem? Will our broth be any the thinner?

"Why, Doctor, see here. I can take you right down through the mill this minute where the men are working the night shift, with a soldier at every door, and I can pick you out man after man, almost at random, who will know more about this than a lifetime of study and observation can ever give us. Why? Because it is their business. It is their life.

"Most of those men never got past the eighth grade in school. The foreigners, as you would call them, got less of school. But they can give you the figures. They can tell you more about overhead and fixed charges, about interest on investment, about selling and insurance costs, about political expenses, about the thousand and one things that eat up the earnings of a mill, than you or an expert accountant could find in the sworn statements of the company. I can get you more information, exact and authoritative information, in the lathe-room of the mill, about the earnings and expenses of the company, than any director of the company can get at a directors' meeting.

"Are the men blind? Is John Sargent a magician, that he can shake a rag before them and make money appear and disappear? No, Doctor. They know what makes the money grow. They know the cost of every ounce of material that comes into that mill, and they know what is produced out of it.

"Man alive! Can't you see the hold it takes

on them? Do they know about it? Why, they see money in the making! Their hands make it. They have the figures and they know what they mean. They know that, after the owner—supposing that he *is* the owner—has taken out expenses and interest on what is his and a surplus for future expansion, their own hands make sixty cents out of every dollar that mill earns. And they get seventeen, or less. They want the difference. Their little girls, hacking their lives out down there in the twine mill, want it. Their wives want it. The children want it. Generations unborn that are now being sinned against, they are crying out for that difference!"

"But this is Communism," the Doctor broke out. "They are Socialists."

"Not by a long shoot-off!" said Father Huetter in his excitement. "They are Irish; they are Italian; they are Polish; they are American. More than half of them are as good Catholics as any in the world. They want nothing but what is theirs. Is that Socialism? And they are going to get it. It is theirs, and who is going to keep it from them? Nobody can keep it from them. But some powers and classes in this country think that they are going to keep them back. Those powers will find themselves high and drying on the wreckage-strewn banks of this rushing stream of our national life.

"Socialists?" He leaped upon the word.

"Socialists? What if they were pessimists, or bigamists, or futurists? Are they right or are they wrong? They want that difference between seventeen cents and sixty. What do they care about Socialism, or its doctrines, or its rant? They want that difference. They are going to have it."

"But," said the Doctor, rallying in the last ditch, "you are giving the owner nothing for his brains, his power for organization. The 'difference' is largely the product of his peculiar type of genius."

"No." Father Huetter returned. "Not even 'largely.' He could hire plenty of managers, for less than the salary which he credits to himself, who would do as well."

"And you would halt the progress of the race by pulling all down to a mediocre level. All our progress has been made by the outstanding efforts of such men as he. They would have nothing to work for."

"Better," said Father Huetter, "that John Sargent should have nothing to work for, than that our little girls and boys should work for him for nothing."

"And, what goes much farther," said the Doctor, "you destroy the sense of individuality in the man. Socialism and Communism can have but one logical end in human morals and human thought. When they have abolished economic responsibility in the man, they must go on to re-

lieve him of his moral responsibilities, his sense of right and wrong, as applied to himself. What is he then but an irresponsible atom in a blind and fixed cosmic system? Where then is free will or faith in God, or anything that gives a man a soul of his own? That would be the end."

"No." The Dean arose slowly, stretching himself. "I have known the American people a long time. No 'ism' will ever go very deep with them. Men and women they are, boys and girls, living and laughing, working and dying, marrying and crying, and going hungry if they have to. But they are always sound. If they have to use Socialism, as politics, to get them what they want, well, they will use it. But they will drop the 'ism' like a rind, when they are through with it.

"In the press of this struggle for bread and rights many are blinded. Blood and bitterness come into their eyes, but it is not 'isms' nor systems nor theories that will ever hurt them. 'Tis the iron and the canker of the struggle itself that I fear, hardening and corroding their hearts. Dear God, send the end quickly. I wish I might see it.

"What time will you say Mass in the morning, Doctor?"

CHAPTER VIII

THE WORK AT OUR HAND

"THE Irish don't seem to take to it, Dean," Mother Mary John complained. "The others, now, don't seem to mind at all. They don't hold back. There's good bread and milk there to be eaten, and they take it without let or thank-you. So they should. Why should children thank anybody for the bread they get? Haven't they the right to it? But the Irish—!"

"Well, you see, Mother, the Irish have long memories."

"Memories? But it's these babies, I tell you, Dean; they're the worst. What memories have they?"

"You can never tell anything about an Irish baby, Mother," the Dean proceeded to explain the unexplainable. "You see, some of them remember things that happened in Ireland a hundred years ago. I christened one just the other day and he had a look in his eye that, I declare, if you so much as mentioned Boyne Water to him he'd strike you. They are like that."

"I never know what you're talking about, Dean, when you begin on the Irish. And you

know I don't. But," she added slowly, "some of the time I believe some of it is true."

Mother Mary John, being a convert from one of the earliest Vermont families, could not know what was the matter with the Irish children; much less could she know what the Dean meant by his whimsical talk.

"At any rate," she concluded, "I wish they wouldn't make me feel that I'm degrading them every time I try to make them take a bit of bread and milk. There's that little Monica Connors. She's about the size of a pint pitcher and she could write with the corners of her cheek bones, but do you think I could get her to as much as look at the food here until I had promised to let her stay and help wash up the cups? And the boys, they hang back along the wall and push each other forward, until you fairly have to grab them and force a bit of bread into their hands.

"I don't understand them. Why, it isn't as though they were grown-ups and you were asking them to accept charity. It isn't charity at all. It's their right."

"I know it, Mother. We have all the logic on our side, and the children are wrong. But, they are Irish children, as you say; and the Irish race has gone through things that make it forever chary of bread that is *given* to it."

"But," the Mother persisted, "these children never heard of that. Their parents never knew anything of it."

"True," admitted the Dean. "But, don't I tell you, the Irish babies have long memories?" he insisted perversely.

The Reverend Mother gave it up. He and his Irish were always incomprehensible. For thirty years she had been learning that.

The Dean had inadvertently wandered into the school at two o'clock in the afternoon, just when the smallest of the children were being dismissed for the day.

Along the whole length of the lower hall of the school ran a narrow table, improvised by the sisters out of boards and benches. On it were spread cups of milk and thick slices of bread for all.

On the very first day of the fall term the Dean had seen the pinched look of the children's faces, and he had taken his measures. He had sent messages up into the hill country, to friends and old parishioners of the days when he had tended all that country alone. Their response was in the form of huge cans of milk that came down every morning anonymously from little wayside milk stations on the O. & W. and the Belden River lines.

The bread was another matter. Ostensibly it was the gift of bakers in Albany. But only Father Huetter could have told that the Dean's little property, left him by a sister dead years ago, had been sold and that his salary was hypothecated for a time longer than he might rea-

sonably expect to have a salary. It seems that he was no more prudent now than he had been in that day, at the other end of his life, when he and his people had helped finance the start of Milton Sargent's mill.

But Father Driscoll was not thinking of any of these things now. He was looking down the long rows of the children, and seeing the thing that the Mother had complained of.

As she had said, the Slavic and Italian children marched up to the table by platoons and stood munching and drinking, without urging and without thanks. Why should children thank anybody for food when it was there, just naturally to be eaten by hungry folk?

But the Irish were plainly different. They hung back and kept their eyes off the food. Some, even the littlest ones, tried to slip by unnoticed, and even when they were caught and made to take food they swallowed it hastily, almost furtively.

"Dear God!" the Dean murmured, his old heart wincing in sympathy and understanding, "will we never forget? Those children learned that lesson four and five generations ago! And I, if I was among them, I'd be doing just what they are doing. I couldn't help it. This comes of being born of a race that carries its past forever with it!

"I should not have come here at this hour. I

did not mean to," he deprecated. "They're bad enough with the sisters, but they're worse when they think I'm looking. I'll go away. And I'm only asking them to eat the bite that God gives them as their right! Yet they look up at me out of eyes that are sharp with hunger—to see if I notice them taking charity.

"Charity! Charity! Dear God above! What an abuse is that word in the mouths of men, when the very babies fear it!"

The Mother had gone on down the line and was too far away to have heard any of this even if he had intended it for her hearing. He turned away sharply, and when he was out in the street he walked briskly for ten minutes, hardly noting where he was going.

Old Richard Flanagan halted him in that high-pitched, querulous voice that comes from a crabbed temper, rheumatics, and the North of Ireland:

"Where are you away to now, without a word, Your Deanery?"

The title of a Rural Dean in this country is one that seems to lack something of euphonious dignity. The young people can address him as Dean quite simply and satisfactorily, but to the old people this seems too curt. They want something that rolls better on the tongue.

The Dean stopped short, suddenly remembering that he had no fixed destination.

"Oh, how are you, Richard? I didn't know I was this far up the street. How's the rheumatism?"

"Again ye had it ye wouldn't step so smart, Your Deanery. Will the min be paid th'night, I don't know?" he queried, with that high lift at the end of his voice that makes a question mark for any form of words.

"Why not?" said the Dean. "Did you hear anything to the contrary?"

Richard Flanagan sat on his porch daily from April to November. From his vantage ground, where rheumatism held him, he kept the road and took toll from all who would pass on foot. Old and young, rich and poor, male and female, he questioned them. His information was sometimes true, often wonderful, often enough wilfully untrue. But it was always voluminous and comprehensive. It covered everything that possibly could and could not happen in the range of the world. If he did not know the truth, he had at least heard all sides of every matter.

"Dinny Corridon," he piped, "passed here to tell me that there is no money at the mill and that the banks would give none on the machines that were turned out this week. So the Colonel can only give the men pay checks, and the stores won't take them. I warn you, the stores won't take them; but the saloons, they might."

"Well, let's hope it will not prove quite so

bad," said the Dean. "I think Dinny is by nature a pessimist."

"He *did* lie to me once," the old man admitted, taking the big word at a leap. "But not by nathur, not by nathur. It was about the reservoir, and I think he was put up to it."

But the Dean with a parting warning about bad weather and rheumatism was already on the move up the street. The sufferer on the porch was left somewhat disgruntled and unsatisfied with himself. He did not like to have any one get by without paying him his tribute of at least some little bit of information.

"Ey-ah!" He complained to the general world. "Time was whin he could stop to talk about a thing or two; but now, what with advisin' governors and sthrikin' sthrikes, he haven't a minute to—"

"Who's that mumblin' about the priest behin' his back?" came a sharp voice from within the door.

"I only said," Richard defended, "he might stop till I'd put him the length of a question or two."

"He has more to do than bringin' grist to your cackle mill," snapped the voice through the doorway.

Mr. Flanagan went back to the consideration of his rheumatism. It was apparent that his autocratic jurisdiction was limited strictly to the eternal forum of the sidewalk. In winter his

must have been that emptiest of all human glories, that of a monarch without a realm.

The Dean turned the first corner, intending to make a circuit to the other side of the town where he remembered that he had some calls to make.

He was worried by what Flanagan had told him. To be sure, he had anticipated the refusal of the banks in Milton to give cash on the machinery first completed by the men. That had been the weak point in the Governor's plan from the beginning—the lack of actual money. When the Governor had stopped the strike in the Milton Machinery works by putting the men back to work under martial law, he should, of course, have seen that there was plenty of ready money to pay the men. But the Dean knew that there had been no time. The Governor could not just then force through an appropriation for the purpose, and there was no available contingent fund in the State treasury on which he could put his hand.

But the Dean had not anticipated that the stores would refuse food for the pay checks which Colonel Gardiner, the Governor's representative in charge of the mill, would have to issue to the men for their first week's wages. These checks would be in the name of the Milton Machinery Company, and endorsed with the authority of the Governor of the State. They would certainly be redeemable in money in due time.

But there was no way to force storekeepers to

accept them in payment for food. And the Dean remembered the circumstances in which nearly all the merchants of Milton stood, with regard to the Company and John Sargent.

The genius and the foresight of old Milton Sargent had been almost diabolical. He had expected labor and social troubles from the beginning. And from the beginning he had provided for them. He foresaw that the quickest and surest weapon against a strike was the direct control of the food supply. So, as soon as the first profits of his mill came to him he put them right into the purchase of the land which he saw would be the business part of the already growing village. Then he opened stores and secured all the trade, so that his people brought his money back to him for everything that they ate and wore.

Again he spread farther out, as he foresaw the coming growth, and bought up all the land upon which the little city of Milton stands to-day. Most of this he sold, lot by lot, to his employees, for homes. His terms to them were easy and very liberal—generally not more than three hundred per cent. above what he had paid for the land. For this he received wide praise as the most intelligent and advanced manufacturer in his part of the State. Milton was pointed out as the model manufacturing village, where every workingman was a free and independent man—owning his own home, you see.

Noted sociological writers of that day came to Milton, took statistics, nodded wise heads, and went away to write that Milton Sargent had, for once and all, solved the labor problem. He had, by giving his men the chance to own something in his town, so bound up and combined his interests and theirs and those of the mill and the town that no questions could ever come between them.

Milton Sargent had really wished and had worked early and late to realize his wish, that every head of family in his employ should own a home in Milton. His reasoning was this. If they own their homes they will have to stay in Milton. There will never be any other mill here but mine. If they own their homes and I own their jobs and the supply of food, they will have to stay here and work for me, at my terms, just as long as they naturally live.

So he actively encouraged them to buy lots and helped them to build, on very fair terms. But in every deed that he gave them there was one iron-bound restriction. No lot that he sold them could ever be used for any purpose other than as a dwelling lot.

With unerring instinct he predicted, and directed, the commercial growth of the town, and kept in his own hands every bit of property in the line of that prospective growth. Corner lots in residence sections he retained, for groceries—and saloons. If, for any reason, a lot which he



had sold became useless for residence purposes it reverted naturally to the original owner.

When, in the advance of public opinion, the old system of company stores, by which he sold necessaries direct to his employees, became too obnoxious, he gave it up. He did not really need it. He rented his store properties to individuals who should conduct them as their own. He allowed those individuals to own their stocks, but he gave them only very short tenure of lease in their stores and otherwise surrounded them with such conditions that he held them completely in his power. A merchant or tradesman who crossed Milton Sargent once, would never, after the expiration of his lease, again be in the position to do so.

John Sargent, at his accession to power in Milton, had not changed any of these things. He understood the system and knew its value. He developed it so as to handle the various public utilities of the town as they came into being, and he organized three small banks. These not only gave him an added capital with which to work; they also tightened his hold on every merchant in the little city.

So the Dean was worried. He knew that at a word from John Sargent every grocer and provision man and clothier in Milton would feel obliged to refuse the pay checks that were to be issued in the name of the Milton Machinery Company.

He saw the wall of entrenched power against which the Governor had run in his effort to force John Sargent to arbitrate the strike in Milton. And he thought he saw further and more intricate difficulties ahead, when the mill, in order to run as the Governor had started it, must try to buy raw materials from capitalist friends and natural allies of John Sargent. But he was not disheartened. He believed, did this old man. Seventy-four years of disillusion had not dimmed the boyish faith of his heart.

He went about his business with head erect, not forgetting to say a prayer by the way for the courage and the wisdom of that square-headed young Presbyterian, the Governor, to whom he had taken a great fancy.

When he came home he found Nonie Gaylor waiting to talk with him. He had not seen Nonie Gaylor since the night when her promised husband, young Harry Loyd, was shot down in the road in front of the mill by John Sargent's guards. He had heard that she sat all day in her little home by the River Road, seeing no one, hugging her grief in silence.

That was not good for her, he knew. And he had thought, Nonie being alone in the world, that he would send some of the Sisters to her to persuade her to go away for a time. But, no. He remembered the ten years when Nonie was growing up alone with a dissolute old father, and how she had shielded that father and gone out to

work for him and how she had insisted that he was the best of fathers and that she loved him and was proud of him and how she had dared the world to sympathize with her.

His ears had taught him that there are some souls who cannot be helped by anything or anybody in this world. They carry the burdens of others, but their own they must carry alone. Their fires burn inwardly, and they have to ask their own questions of God and life. Nonie Gaylor was one of these.

Nothing about the girl told in any way of tragedy. She was dressed simply in the neat blacks and whites that everybody associated with her. Her manner was entirely natural and easy.

The Dean marveled at the self-control, the powerful springs of will, that could so cover a tortured heart and smooth out a girlishly fresh face for the world to see. But he feared it. A fire that is too closely pent will burst some time. And its bursting is madness.

"I only came in to tell you, Dean, that I am going away," she said, quite casually; "and to give up my Sodality band."

"Ah, I had thought of that," agreed the Dean, taking up her manner. "I had thought of advising you to go away for a while, a change; a change is always good, you know."

"Yes. But I am going away for good. I am never coming back to Milton."

"Well, now I had hardly expected that, Nonie. You see, you somehow seem to belong here with us. You have—you have plans, I suppose? Where will you go?"

"Does it matter?" she said with a pitiful little shrug, dropping her mask for the instant.

Father Driscoll waited a moment, giving her time to command herself. Then he said slowly:

"No. I suppose it does not. We have to take ourselves with us, anyway. So the surroundings cannot matter very much."

The girl started. He had spoken the very thought that had been going the dizzy round of her mind, sleeping or waking, for all these days: what use was it to go, when she could not get away from herself?

"I know," she said. "That is true. I cannot hope to get away from myself. And I have thought and thought and planned. And I cannot come to anything. It is all so useless.

"But I must get away. Can't you see, Dean, that I have to get away from here. It doesn't matter at all where I go. But I must go. Can't you see that?" she appealed.

"I am not sure that I do. Tell me, child." He wanted to make her talk, to keep her talking, so that she might ease down some of the strain under which her mind labored.

"I thought I wanted to go and hide myself in a convent," she began aimlessly. "Oh, not be-

cause I belonged there, but just to crawl into some place where the world couldn't find me and hurt me any more. But—"

"No. That wouldn't do," said the Dean lightly. "The idea is too medieval, and the novelists have overworked it already. That is, I mean, Nonie, a convent is a place for people who have just the one reason for being there."

"I knew that. But I have to work. I have to go on living. Though I don't see why," she added, with a sudden rush of bitterness.

"The river runs right by my door," she went on quietly; "it is always friendly to me. Since I was a baby I have never been afraid of it."

The Dean was silent. Every soul must cross these dark bridges by itself.

"There is a place, you know it, Dean, where the water from the canal tumbles down the waste weir into the river. It has made a great dark pool there at the edge of the river and the water races round and round, so quiet and so swift.

"I used to go and sit there sometimes, years ago, when father was—was—

"I have gone there sometimes lately, and looked down into the dark of the water, and wondered: Why not?

"It looked so cool and so certain, so dependable. Whatever I got, down under the water there, I could keep, couldn't I? It wouldn't be snatched away from me, like Harry was."

Suddenly she shivered. Then, with a visible

effort, she straightened herself and threw back her shoulders.

The Dean was satisfied. She had crossed her bridge.

"You have to work, and you do not feel that you can bear to go back into the mill. That is it, is it not?" said the Dean steadily.

"How could I? How could I?" she broke out. "Do you remember that four times every day—every day of all my life, four times I should have to pass the spot where John Sargent murdered my Harry? It is not the horror of it. Don't think that. I could kneel every time on the spot.

"But if I did, and if I said my prayers every time, do you know that I would still get up from my knees every time with just one thought—always one thought—to kill John Sargent? Think of that! Four times every day for years and years of life, a murderess in my heart.

"Oh, you are a priest. You have always been good. You do not know what anger and hate is like.

"And then I should go in to do John Sargent's work for him! Think of it! To make him richer, so that he might kill the Harrys of other girls.

"And do you know why I had the position that I had in the mill, and why I was, in a few months more, to be put over all the women in the mill? Think of that! Five hundred women and girls

under me, a girl of twenty-two! I was to be the highest paid woman operative in New York State. And why? Why? Because I had proved that I could get more work and drive more speed out of other poor, fainting women and girls, and save more money for John Sargent.

"Think of that, year in and year out. And then think of that spot that I would pass—four times a day, every day, for ever and ever!"

Father Driscoll had no answer ready. The girl sat picking at the finger ends of her gloves. After a little he said:

"Nonie, would you rather not have had your love at all and not have suffered, or have had it and suffered as you have?"

"I had three years of Harry's love," she said quickly; "for one hour of it I would have suffered all!"

"Then, child, you do not hate God for giving you the love, only for taking it—"

"God? Why, God didn't have anything to do with it. How could He? What did I do to—?"

"That is our mistake, child, nearly always. It is not what we *have* done. It is what God may have for us to do.

"Nonie, will you listen to me a moment, and try to forget that I am just a blundering old man who knows no more of the ways of God than you do?

"The Company, as you say, had picked you out and trained you for a purpose, to drive all the others. Why? Because they saw things in you that made them believe you could do it better than another.

"Suppose that God foresaw something to be done that you could do better than another. Suppose He saw the time coming when the women in the mill would need not a driver, but a sister and a guide—one who had suffered more and who was stronger and wiser by that suffering. Suppose that the way to such wisdom and to such helpfulness lay only through great suffering. And *that* one was you—would you refuse the suffering?"

"No! no!" she cried, springing to her feet. "I would not refuse. God knows I would welcome it. Anything, anything! If only it were of some use, some good to the others!"

"I know that, of course, child.

"Now, you might go out to nurse the wounded on battlefields, or you might go out to tell the story of your love and your suffering to your sisters through the country and preach Suffrage to them, or Socialism. In either case you would do good, no doubt. But the work God wishes us to do He generally places near our hand.

"I am old, child, and the changes come fast. I see one coming here that will give you a work to do that will fill your arms and your heart. Can you believe and have faith for a little while?"

"Yes. I believe. I don't know why, but I do.

"I will stay and work, as long as you say, Dean. But—I think I'll go home now."

She went out hurriedly, without another word. She knew that she could no longer control herself and she wanted to be alone.

The Dean walked over into his study and sat down heavily at his desk.

"God send that I did right!" he prayed.

It was the dark threatening end of an autumn day. Three thousand men were crowding each other out through the gates of the Milton Machinery Company's plant. Colonel Gardiner had not attempted to start the twine mill, so none of the women had been at work. The men had been at work ten days and this was the regular pay night.

There was no money in the mill. The men had seen thousands of dollars' worth of machinery go out to fill orders on file all through the strike. But the banks of Milton, controlled by John Sargent, would not advance a cent of money on the invoices. The Colonel had appealed frantically to the Governor, but the latter had answered that pay checks were sufficient for the present. And in any case, where could he get forty thousand dollars in cash?

The men did not understand. Rumors had been running through the mill all week. They

knew that they were there working under the protection of the military of the State. But they mistrusted the whole thing. The idea that the State could, even if it sincerely wished, do anything effectively for them and for their interest had been exploded so many times that they were slow to believe.

Some said it was a grandstand play of the Governor, for politics. It would fizzle out, as all such things did. Others argued that it was all a trick of Sargent, to get them back to work and break the spirit of their strike.

They took their pay checks. What was the use of refusing them? But they showed that they had no great faith in them.

Many had worked the whole time without a real meal. There was no credit for them in any store. They were hungry and sick. They could get something for the checks.

They were wrong. They could not get anything with the checks. They trooped into stores and markets. Meat men and provision men, who had been clinging desperately to their stocks for months and fighting off bankruptcy until work should begin, now looked sadly at the pay checks—which they knew would be perfectly good—and shook their heads. The grim word had gone out from John Sargent that no man should dare sell an ounce of food on those checks.

But there was one thing that could be had with the checks. Drink—all the drink the men

wanted. The notices stood in all the saloons, as John Sargent had directed. The checks were good. There was plenty of free lunch. But there was no change for the checks. No bar would cash any part of a check. The check was good. But it must be left in the bar until it was used up.

Remember that this crowd of men worked all day in heat and grime and iron dust, at trades in which practically all men drink some. The strength and the wickedness of Sargent's planning need no detailing.

Some of the men, the irresponsible and the weak, left their checks in the bars. But the most of them, after tramping vaguely about and being refused at one store after another, shifted slowly off into the side streets and crept home, ugly, hungry, hopeless.

Where it came from no man could tell. Probably it was at first a burry, angry murmur that ran up and down the wells of tenement houses, from one pinched home to another. It rose above the squalls of unfed, disappointed children. It was the sulky, upbraiding cry of the tigress in the lair, when the feckless lord comes home empty-mouthed from the hunt.

It ran down dark stairs, the cry, and out into dark, foul streets. It beat up against closed windows, and drew them open, and drew out unkempt heads to answer it.

The answer came in every Slavic tongue, from

Lett to Czech. It came in four Italian dialects. It came in every known accent of English. It did not need any language, for it was the cry of the women, who do eternally understand each other in need.

Out of dark alleys they came, splashing through puddles, out of bare little cottages, out of solid-looking homes, they came hurrying and rushing into solid groups. They did not stop for argument or discussion. The one cry, the one impulse that had started them all, told them where they were going and what they were going to do.

Across the railroad tracks, from Polack Town and Little Italy, they came pouring in groups and troops of hundreds, large-boned, guttural-voiced Slav women, shrill-throated, sturdy Italian women—hunger in their eyes, mother fury in their hearts.

Now these met other crowding, pushing tides of women, tall, thin-lipped hill women of the country itself, and broad-chested Irish-American women, no less of the country. All the races of all the women of earth could have met here and talked the common language of the cries of their babies.

Into the blocks of State Street where the big grocery and provision stores were grouped they came reeling and whirling, wave after wave of faces, white and care-fretted under the flare of the lights.

They had no war cry. They carried no banner. They wanted no advertising. They were just everybody's wife and sister, with a pay check in her clenched hand, come to get the food that her man had earned for her children and her.

They were in the stores before astonished and frightened clerks could think of locking doors.

Now the next quarter of an hour was not pretty. It is better to pass it over without description.

These women had for months been looking down into the hunger-big eyes of their children. Their bared nerves had been flecked by the questions, the eternal, Why? Why? of the child. Why could it not have butter and sugar on its bread? Why could it not have even butter? Why, finally, could it not have bread?

They have seen the plump, round little bodies of their babies falling away under the ribs. They were elementary mothers of men, these women. They loved to kiss the round, paddy cushions of fat that lie at the back of a baby neck. And they had found there only the pinched outcroppings of hard little bones.

They had seen their rough, noisy boys suddenly sit down in the thick of their play, because they were weak and dizzy for food. They had caught their little girls scraping and scratching their cheeks with wire hair brushes—to take the white out.

Lately they had seen their husbands and their

growing boys, whom it was their pride to feed, come staggering home to eat: and there was no food.

Food! Food! The lack of it had tortured their days. The dreams of it had tormented their nights. How many nights had they walked among heaps and stacks of food, and when they reached out for it, always it turned to something else? How many times had they not dreamed the pantry full of food, only to awaken to the gaunt reality?

Some of them had seen their nurslings die at their breasts. There was no food there. And they had followed a little box up the long River Road to the hills and the cemetery, and wanted to stay there.

And always their nightmares had been of food, food in the hand, food in the very mouth.

Now here was food piled all about them, bread, and meat, and vegetables in tins, and meat, meat hanging in strips, hanging in sacks, everywhere. Their dreams, their very dreams!

There was none to stop them. They were a hundred, two hundred, as many as could get into a store. They had only to throw down pay checks and take, and take, and *take!*

If some turned sick and hysterical and screamed at the sight of it all; if some fainted; if some grabbed and grabbed, more than they could carry; if some crowded and pushed and trampled; if they finally jammed all together and

screamed and fought, impotently, still hugging their loot—well, the wonder would have been, rather, if they had not done these things.

Up through the pushing, tugging mass of women that was struggling on the sidewalks unable to get into the stores, came a slender, hollow-eyed girl in blacks and whites. Women gave her way because her tragedy and her grief had set her apart. Then, too, she was a captain of women. Her business was to organize and command.

Swiftly, as she came to each group she plucked two or three women apart to her and gave them quick, sharp commands. They knew her; they were accustomed to obey her. Her curt, everyday voice brought them back from hysteria, to sense.

They did as she told them. Quietly urging their way into a store, they took command. They grabbed pencils and paper bags, or anything to write upon, and made hurried, scrappy accounts of what each woman had. Then they began forcing a line of those who were supplied out of the doors. The screaming stopped. What had been a riot of maddened women resolved itself, in five minutes, into lines of quiet shoppers who furtively tucked up wisps of straggled hair and who only showed what they had been through by the quick, quiet sobbing of their bosoms.

A line of soldiers, called by frantic storekeep-

ers, came double-quicking up the middle of the street. But, though they came quickly, men were there before them. Men, sheepish of face, but grim, too, slipped out of side streets and lined themselves two and three deep along the curb. They did not approve of whatever the women were doing. Men are ever more law-bound and helplessly conservative in a crisis than are women. But, if the women were bound to do it, they should not be molested.

The thin single line of soldiers, stretched the length of the street, had no orders to shoot down lines of men in order to clear the stores of women. They stood there, foolish and useless. And when Nonie Gaylor calmly walked through them to the other side of the street, to see how her lieutenants were doing over there, the company through which she walked grounded arms with a smart rattle.

At ten o'clock Father Huetter, coming in, reported to the Dean the manner of these things, and that the town was full fed.

The Dean laid down his breviary, to say:

"Thank God! I said better to the child than I knew—the work at our hand, that is what He would have us do."

But Father Huetter did not understand. He was very tired and he went on up to bed.

CHAPTER IX

"HIS STRONG CITY"

Out on the rolling uplands the golden russets of the early autumn had been fighting a desperate rear-guard battle for a week now with the forces of black, frosty death that came sweeping down the mountains. The forces of cold and death had conquered everywhere. From the upper ribs of the mountains the hopeless dun color of oncoming winter reached down over the foothills and down into the valleys till it came even into the room where the Dean of Milton sat reading the Book of Proverbs.

The room was suddenly chilled and darkened by the shadow of a low, drifting cloud. The Dean shivered and looked up from his book, repeating aloud the words he had last read: "The rich man's wealth is his strong city: the destruction of the poor is their poverty!"

Over the shoulder of Orrin Mountain and down across the breast of it, like the sash of some gaunt order of death, he saw a black cloud draping itself. That was a moving snowstorm, twenty miles away, hurrying down across the slope of the mountain. In another two weeks or so a brother of that snowstorm would come rush-

ing down across the foothills and would howl through the streets of Milton, barking up dark stairways and whining under damp floors. On its breath it would bring pneumonia and in lungs already weakened by half-starvation it would lay the seeds of consumption.

In the older days he had never given thought to the coming of winter. Always he had loved the bite of the wind on a cold night ride to some lonely house in the hills. It had brought blood to his cheeks, courage and love to his heart. Now the thought of it made him shudder. Age has no surplus blood for thrills.

But he was not thinking of himself. In those older days he had seen his people, a strong-limbed, full-blooded, vigorous race, fighting the battle of the strong with winter. They were used to look full into his roaring throat and laugh while they plowed and hewed their way from woodland to river-bed.

In high, dry houses, before heaping fires, with illimitable woodpiles standing at their very doors, winter had no menace for them. Now his people lived in dank, dripping houses, where they huddled over a few inadequate coals. They crept out of damp beds, out into the fog of the morning, to go to John Sargent's mill. There they stewed all day in a fog and swirl of condensing steam, and at night they scurried home with what little of thin blood was left in them, the icy wind freezing their wet clothes to their

limbs. To them, winter was not a season of the year: it was an implacable, vicious enemy, a scourge, a ravaging curse. It decimated them.

Those who live in moderate climates will never know anything of the terrible threat which winter lays upon our people of the northern mill towns. It is a real and abiding terror with them.

A great and plain-spoken economist recently discussing the question of why the lines of industrial advance go always from east to west, never from north to south, put the real reason in a breath. It is not, he said, because the northern peoples love work more or are naturally more industrious. It is because they have always the pinch of winter at their back. This was what the words of the Proverb meant to the Dean. What chance had his people against the economic forces that held them always on the edge of dependence?

In their long struggle with the Milton Machinery Company they had so far been able to pit their patience and endurance against the money power of the Company. But now nature itself was coming to fight John Sargent's battle for him. To John Sargent the coming of winter meant only the coming of a new and inexpensive ally to him in his battle with the people. The strong city of his wealth around him made him immune to the blast. He would not suffer. He could even sit within, calmly reckoning the fury of the wind, counting every roar of it as a new

weapon in his hands against these obstinate people who refused to go on producing for him. Their poverty was indeed their destruction.

The grim, pitiless truth of the lesson caught the Dean by the throat. It was already a time-worn truism, printed on the heart of the people, when the Author of Proverbs put it into the words of the Book. And thirty centuries, and all the revolutions of earth, had not taken from it a jot of its terrible meaning!

The upper and the nether millstones ground on unceasingly. Above, the pressure of power and wealth and privilege; below, the pressure of hunger and cold; and between lay the poor of all the earth, forever being crushed by the two forces!

The tower of the Cosmopolitan Building stands with its feet upon the solid rock, thirty yards deep in the quicksand and mud of Nassau Street. From the rock it shoots up its thirty-five stories into the air. East, west, and south it looks out over miles of jumbled buildings; over the East River to the ridge of Long Island; over the fretting bosom of the bay to the wide sweep of the ocean beyond; over the North River and the level stretches of New Jersey to the great heart of the country. To the north it cannot overlook much, for its view is cut by other Babylonic pretensions like itself. But it overlooks these, too, in another way. It has its eye upon

every foot of the priceless ground of Manhattan Island. It has its eye upon every moving train in America. It has its ear to the hum of every turning wheel in the land. It has the Sub-Treasury of the United States at its knee. It listens to the count of gold in every smallest bank of the nation.

On the surface, it seems that the wealth of the country is traded and bargained for on the floor of a certain building in Broad Street. It is not so. The Stock Exchange is merely an enlargement of its own tickers, marking the marchings and counter-marchings of forces set in motion by the battles and the treaties of a few men who work in the secluded fastnesses of the Cosmopolitan and other buildings about it. Into this building stream the inviolate private wires that connect men ear to ear with impenetrable private offices a thousand miles away. From it go out the single, cryptic words that sweep pawns off the chess-board of Wall Street. It is the cold, wire-strung brain of the Strong City of the wealth of the Western Continent.

The twenty-fourth floor of the tower is a single great room, light and airy as a flat mountain-top. Ingenious shading tempers the light that floods in from all four sides of the room to a perfect restfulness for the eyes, and air brought down from the very tip of the tower and washed and heated or cooled, according to the season, makes each breath a sigh of respiratory luxury.

John Sargent sat at a table. His eye, roving restlessly out of window to east and south, took in the far-away line of the open sea and noted idly that the first northeaster of the season was sweeping down from New England. A fifty-mile gale was tearing round the corners of the tower. But not even a tremor or an echo of it was to be noticed within.

The storm outside had no interest for him. As the heavily-muffled doors of the room swung open, his eyes jerked back irritably to watch the men who were every few moments coming into the room to lunch. They came in by twos and threes and gravitated quietly to tables where other men were waiting for them. There were men here whose every moment of a business day is so closely watched, for rumor and gossip of the Street, that they could not visit another man's office without starting a column of speculative gossip in the next morning's papers.

Here, in the democracy of privileged privacy, away from the prying of reporters, a man could drop casually down at a table in front of another man, and they could have the route of a proposed railroad settled or have set a firm on the way to ruin before the gravy had time to harden on their plates.

John Sargent was waiting for two men. One of them was the greatest and the most feared of all the rulers of the fortunes of men in this country. It was not that he was so very wealthy—

though he was wealthy beyond the dreams of the world of even thirty years ago—but because he had made himself the keeper of the very gates of wealth. He had the credit of the country in his grip; so that no man was really worth this figure or that figure, but only the amount of credit which Jasper Macon would place opposite that man's name. Because Jasper Macon could at any moment shake to its foundations any given bank in the country, credit was his to extend or to withhold. Credit, that illusive, impossible thing which is the life-breath of our commercial and industrial body, this man could choke off from every other man who needed it.

The other man was the wisest and the farthest-seeing of the race which since the days of Esau has lived upon the mistakes of others. Gathering where he had not strewn, reaping where he had not sown, winning where he had not risked, he had no illusions. The past as well as the future held for him incontestable lessons. Though the breeding of money and the study of "things as they are" was the business of his life, he could still remember that things might not always be as they were. The Jew is your true discounter of things future, because for him Jehovah, a personal God, is ever within striking distance. By training and the force of the times in which he lived, Nathan Oppenheim was an individualistic money-getter. By nature he was a patriarchal Socialist.

Jasper Macon came first, striding across the room, his great, malformed nose making straight for where Sargent sat. Oppenheim followed at the next swing of the door. But, though he well knew just where he was to go, he did not make a direct course.

When Sargent had seated the two of them and had signaled the waiter to lay the already ordered luncheon, he turned to Macon with a certain air of nervous deference that was very strange on him.

"Last night and this morning," he said, "I talked with the old-line leaders of the Party, from up-State districts and from the City. They are sore enough and disappointed enough in the Governor to vote for his impeachment. But they are afraid. Bailey, the Republican State leader, as you know, has the votes at his command to do the work. But he is afraid."

"Of what?" asked Macon noncommittally.

"They don't see where the money's coming from."

"Money," said Macon, "what has money to do with the matter? Their votes belong to the Party. They are sent to the legislature by the people; that is, the majority party of their districts—to do what the Party wants done. Do they expect to be bribed to do their duty?"

"Well, it isn't quite that, Mr. Macon, not quite that. There was a time—but not now. You see, they are looking ahead. If they should vote

to impeach Gordon Fuller for unlawfully confiscating my mill and property, next summer they would have to go back to their people looking for renomination and re-election. And there would be a howl. They would find opposition. There would be a contest in every district. Contests are expensive. They want to know just where they are to get the money."

"But there are always roads and bridges to be built," Mr. Oppenheim suggested lightly.

Macon shot one swift, questioning glance at the speaker, but the countenance of the wise man showed nothing but a bland cynicism.

Jasper Macon had, in the course of his climb to the absolute power which was now his, used many instruments, in many ways. Some of those instruments—men—had bent under his hand. Before they went to jail, or died, they had threatened to tell things. Generally they had told nothing. But he had not always been able to preserve the lofty moral tone of these later days.

He did not know how much Oppenheim had meant, but he was touched and angry. His anger in these days always took the form of severe rectitude.

"If," he pronounced, "the Governor has broken the Constitution of the State, he must be impeached. These men are bound by their oaths, no matter what it may cost them."

A thin, enigmatic smile spread over Oppen-

heim's lean, pocked face. He was often obliged to admire the masterful piracy of Macon's methods. But to him, a product of a race which by fear and force has always been obliged to be adept in the dissimulation of every emotion, this man's sudden poses of virtue were almost comically childish. He knew what Macon was thinking. John Sargent knew what Macon was thinking. Why should Macon insist on striking a pose, when there was neither need nor profit?

But John Sargent was not smiling. An enlarged artery was pounding blood up through his fat neck till it rang in his ears. He was facing ruin, and he knew it. But he did not cringe. He looked straight under the beetling brows of Macon and broke through the pose.

"You mean," he said, "that you have decided that Fuller is not to be impeached?"

"Have I said anything like that?" Macon appealed to Oppenheim. But the Jew merely shrugged his sharp shoulders. He was an interested spectator, not an umpire.

"And have you decided, too," Sargent went on, unheeding, "to let the Governor have material from your steel mills and a market for the machines, so that he can run my own mill over my head? Are you going to do that?"

"Well, I told you three years ago that you had better come into the International," Macon returned bluntly.

"Do you mean that? Do you mean that? Is this your revenge, because I was man enough not to crawl under you then?"

"Don't talk nonsense. What has revenge to do with plans the size of mine? I told you then that your plant was wasteful. It is too far from Pittsburgh and too far from tidewater also, to be economical."

"So now you are going to crush me out, cheaply, eh?" Sargent taunted.

"*You?* I hadn't thought of you." Even Oppenheim's narrow eyes opened at the stupendous, and evidently honest, egotism of the answer. Sargent sat dumb.

"This young Paladin of a Governor of ours," Macon went on to reveal himself, "is due to come a cropper. He rides too high, and he looks still higher. But if we fight him here, it will give him political capital to draw on for years. If we try to impeach him on this thing, do you know where it will probably land him?"

"In the White House," said Oppenheim simply.

"Right. And he's a madman, and dangerous. Now," Macon took them broadly into his confidence, "you cannot fight a lunatic. You *may* kill him, but the chances are against yourself—and there's no profit either way. But, if you can convince other people that he *is* a lunatic, you can have him put out of the way. That is what must be done with this man Fuller. He must

be given a chance to show that he is a lunatic. Let him go on. Let him run the mill at a loss, for a time. I will see that it *is* at a loss. Then he will have to begin cutting down wages. The Socialists and the Labor people will get after him, and that will be the end of him and his experiment. It will make a laughing-stock of this whole Socialistic and Communistic movement for years to come."

"But," said Sargent, "where will my mill, my business, be when you and he get through with it?"

"In the scrap heap, where it belongs—where it would have been any time these three years if the International had thought it would pay to go after you."

The cool, even brutality of this stunned Sargent as a blow between the eyes would have done. He dropped the fork with which he had been prodding at his fish and sat back staring.

Macon went on:

"Then you can go into the International, as you should have done long ago. You won't have much to bring in by that time, but they will take care of you. They'll give you your contracts, enough to keep you going eight or nine months of the year. That'll be enough for you. It's all your mill should ever run anyway. If you had been shutting down three months out of every year, as you were told to do, you'd never have any labor trouble.

"But that's the trouble with you fellows that think you're independent. You run the whole year round and pile up the market. Then you wonder why the market goes to pieces, and why you have strikes.

"If you had anything in your head to see with, you'd see that a market has to be coaxed and starved a little. And you'd see that labor has to be coaxed and starved a little. If your mill was shut down three months every year your people wouldn't be striking, they'd be too busy, paying up back grocery bills, when they did get to work, to think of striking."

Now this was one thing that the Sargents had never done. They had never voluntarily shut their mill doors, in the face of a possible profit, in order to keep their employees in a chastened state of mind. John Sargent was horrified at the idea.

"Sir, my men *must* have work, they must live."

Macon leaned across the table, leering grotesquely.

"Sargent, shut up. You care as much about your men, dead or alive, as you do about the water that runs over your dam."

Macon was willing enough to pose on his own account. But he resented having any one strike an attitude for his benefit.

Sargent saw that the last rag of pretense between himself and Macon had dropped. They were now down to naked, fighting truth. He

held his hand out over the table toward Macon.

"You see that hand," he said. "It shakes. That means I am not going to live long. I feel it and I've been told so—several times. But I'm going to live long enough, and that hand will always be steady enough, for one thing. Before you and the pack of wolves that follow you get a chance at my mill I'll blow the whole of it to smithereens, and myself with it!"

"Well—who'd miss it, or you?"

"That is hardly necessary, Mr. Macon," said Oppenheim, breaking into the charged pause which followed Macon's retort. "You could say that, with some truth, to every man living."

But Sargent had no answer. Macon had struck deeper than he knew. He had merely meant to show Sargent how small were he and his mill in the giant combination, which Macon held in his hand, of all the great industrial producers of the country. Sargent had caught a deeper meaning. He did not hear Oppenheim's protest. Macon's words were pounding down into his soul—Who would miss him? Who would miss him? Not one! Not one of all the men—or women—that lived would care a straw! Not one!

He was fifty-four years old. He was going to die soon. And all that he could do, all that he could threaten was to cut off a possible year or so of his own life. And this big, beetle-browed man had nothing but a jeer for his threat. It

was unthinkable—but it was true. John Sargent, owner of men, master of men, four thousand of them, and this was the sum of him! He had the world's permission to step off into whatever dark place there was, at any time that suited him. He was assured that the world would not be in the least inconvenienced by his going.

His mind jumped to Milton and those there whom he called his men. Men there had been willing to give their lives to take Jim Loyd out of jail. He had seen men and women praying for the soul of Harry Loyd. Who would say a prayer for his soul, supposing that he had such a—

His wife had never loved him. She had not even hated him. In the end, she had merely turned her back on him, and died. To his one boy, a weakling and a drunkard, he paid ten thousand dollars a year—practically blackmail—to keep him in Europe.

A friend? Where could he have made a friend among men like these two, men who only waited for a false step of his to trip him?

Of all the men that he had ever seen his heart had turned to just one. And that man hated him, above the hate of all others. It was one of the bitter quips of fate, that the one man on whose shoulder he would have liked to lay his hand in friendship and complete trust was Jim Loyd, his most implacable enemy.

Once, in the night, when it was very dark, and

he saw the face of Death set toward him, he had cried out: "It's a lie! All a lie. There is no God. If there was, He would have given me a son like Loyd—a man—my kind of man!"

Macon was right. Who would miss him? And his futile little threat of self-destruction—what did it amount to? Only the angry whimpering of a beaten child.

When his mind came back to where they were sitting, Oppenheim was saying:

"You are not estimating that situation right, Mr. Macon. There is something unusual about it. You could not be sure that it would work out the way you expect. It has not been an ordinary strike at all."

"All strikes are alike," said Macon gruffly. "Some are badly handled—that is the only difference."

"No," Oppenheim contended, "this was different. Mr. Sargent's people are Socialists, a lot of them. Oh, not the kind you are thinking of," he said, as Macon snorted his contempt, "not the vociferous, press-agent kind. These are the quiet, unwinking kind of Socialists, that know what they want and are going to get it.

"Look out for them, I say. Look out!

"Also," he went on, "his people had resources. Many of them owned their own homes."

"Criminal folly ever to have allowed that, Sargent—you see it now," said Macon, turning again to Sargent.

"You are both wrong," said Sargent dully. "Do you think that I could not have silenced or tricked or bought all the Socialists that that little town could hold?

"And for the men to own their own homes was my father's policy, and it has been mine. It was right. It always held the men tied to my town and my mill. It worked.

"No. Socialism did not beat me. The fact that some of my men were prepared, that did not beat me. I had to fight something else. I had to fight something that—so they tell me—no man yet has been able to fight successfully. I had to fight the *Catholic Church!*"

The climax was impressive. But Macon was not impressed. He leaned over the table glowering.

"Nonsense," he grunted. "I *own three* churches."

The son of Israel opened his lips to say something. But he shut them with a queer smile and leaned back in his chair. These Christians, he reflected, were always interesting and worth listening to when they were minded to discuss the thing about which they knew least, their religion.

"I mean," said Macon, posing again, as though a little ashamed of his frank cynicism, "the Church is all right. There is no reason why a man should ever have trouble with it. In its own place, and sympathetically treated, it is an aid to business peace and security."

"I guess," said Sargent, "we are talking about different kinds of churches. This is not the velvet-padded, soporific kind. It's a real church, if there is such a thing.

"I suppose there's no use trying to make you understand. But I'm going to try. For myself, I don't pretend to understand. But you, with your advantages—you say you own three churches—you may be able to explain it."

He paused for a swift, curious glance at the masked face of Oppenheim who sat matching his finger nails together. "I am a fool," he said to himself, "trying to tell this thing to this brass-bound hypocrite, and to a Jew." But he gripped his facts stubbornly and went on:

"When I thought the strike had gone on too long, I went up there to take a hand myself. There was a young fellow named Loyd in charge of the strike. He was a Socialist, that's what they told me. Well, he's the same kind of a Socialist that you are, Macon; he'd sweep you or me or anybody else that stood in his way into the gutters or Tophet, to get what he wants. He's that kind of Socialist, just your kind and my kind.

"I offered him fifty thousand dollars to break the strike. Now, there's just where the difference comes. Put you or me in his place, and we'd have taken the fifty thousand. He didn't."

"He didn't want it," said Macon; "that's all."

"Want it? Say, if I live to be a thousand, I'll never see a man want anything as Jim Loyd wanted that fifty thousand. Why, he was reaching out his hand for it!

"And something caught him and pulled his hand back.

"Then he wanted to kill me. He wanted to do that even more than the minute before he had wanted to take the money. But he ran out of the room. Remember, he wanted to kill me. And he could have done it with his hands, as you break a stalk of celery. He didn't do it.

"On Labor Day I shipped in all the trouble-makers and red-eyed orators that I could find in that part of the State. With a little assistance from me, they had the strikers worked up to the riot point. In another minute they'd have been pulling the stones up out of the street. Then something stepped in and sent them quietly about their business.

"I wired the Governor for troops. Something stepped in behind me, and stopped their coming.

"A boy, Jim Loyd's brother, was killed by my guards. Through all that night that whole town hunted me as they would have hunted a mad dog. And a day after that, the whole crowd, thousands of them, walked up past my mill, following that boy's body and praying for his soul. And they wouldn't so much as look up to curse me, where I stood at the window of my office. Something had stepped in between them and me.

"I framed up an explosion in my mill, and made Jim Loyd guilty of it—by means of a couple of suborned witnesses. He is in jail now awaiting trial. He was able and ready to break out of there, lead four thousand men behind him and sack my mill and the town and loot everything in it. He could have produced a miniature civil war, in a night.

"He was able to do it. He was ready to do it. He wanted to do it. And something stepped in to stop him.

"I went to the Governor, demanding protection. Something stepped in and made him send troops, not to protect me but to confiscate my plant and run it to my ruin.

"Now what held Jim Loyd's hand back from my money and my throat? He wasn't afraid. Afraid? If I had him for a son, I wouldn't be here to-day asking you for help. I'd have him fighting you to a standstill for the control of this country.

"What kept him quiet in jail, when he could have walked out? What kept those men from stoning me to death? What gave Gordon Fuller, a machine-made governor, the brains and the grit to mount this high horse that he's riding? I tell you it was the power of the Catholic Church."

"Sargent," said Macon surlily, "either your head is softening, or you are keeping something back—some personal element. The Catholic

Church isn't a ghost, or a fourth dimension. It's made of men."

"You are right," Sargent admitted. "There *is* a personal element. There is an old priest up there. He walks round with his hands behind his back. He's the sworn crony of every bad boy in the town. He knows who threw the stone. But he never tells."

"David Harum in a Roman collar, eh?" laughed Macon.

"Not a bit of it. Or, maybe, some of that, but a whole lot of everything else besides. That man—name's Driscoll—holds the heart and soul of his people in the flat of his hand.

"Protestant and Catholic, Turk—and Atheist believe in him, even Italians. He can wind that whole town about his finger.

"At every step I have made that man has met me and turned me back. And what's his program? What do you think? The Ten Commandments. Whether he's talking to a jailbird or a sulky little girl or the Governor of the State he'll whip out those ten by-laws and insist on measuring the whole thing by them. He even shook the obsolete old yardstick at *me.*"

"But, those commandments are so old," said Oppenheim sarcastically, "that they are now revolutionary. He should be restrained. Has he no superior, no bishop who should curb him?"

"I guess you're thinking of one of those

churches that Macon owns," said Sargent drily.

"Ah, of course! I could not be expected to know, you see."

"Nevertheless," said Macon, brushing aside the by-play, "you should have had him moved out of your way."

"How? I tell you the man has never said a word that was not in direct line with those Commandments. He preaches nothing but straight Gospel, and somehow it hits every time. I tell you it is not the *man* that has beaten me at every turn: it is the inherited, gray wisdom of the Church itself."

"You talk like an English review," said Macon contemptuously. "The priest was in your way. You should have had him removed. You suborned perjury to put Loyd in jail. If Loyd is guilty of conspiring to blow up your mill—and it's your business to prove that he is; and if the priest, as you say, was giving Loyd advice, then, the inference is plain—the priest had knowledge of the conspiracy. You don't have to prove that. The mere whisper of it, the mere mention of his name in such a connexion would be enough to make his bishop remove him temporarily, anyway."

Sargent sat for a long time looking steadily into the unblinking black eyes of the man opposite him. Finally he said:

"Macon, I made a silly threat a while ago.

Well, what you advise would be suicide, almost as direct and quick as if I used a pistol on myself. You realize that, don't you?"

Macon answered levelly:

"It is my answer to your demand for help against the Governor. You have been a thorn in the side of the machinery business for years. You have been a freebooter when other men have combined wisely and for common benefit. You have mishandled your strike so that your town will never again be a peaceful manufacturing unit. You have given the Governor a chance to try an experiment that may shake the whole industrial system of the country.

"You deserve to be crushed. Instead, I am showing you how you could have saved yourself, how you may yet break up the whole situation.

"The Governor took over your mill because he had faith in the old priest's wisdom and judgment. Remove the priest, stir up a big enough rumpus, and the Governor will lose his nerve. Are you afraid to try it?

"Do it," Macon went on, as he rose and threw down his napkin, "do it at once—or be ready to turn your mill over to us, the International, within two months."

Without another word, Macon turned and stalked straight to the door, followed at a few paces by the silent Oppenheim.

John Sargent had not risen with the other two.

When they had gone, he still sat looking dully down at the storm that was lashing the bay.

The Strong City of his wealth was crumbling about him, and he shivered in a quaking, marrow-freezing ague of despair and failure.

Finally, he pushed the table away and went down to his offices, ten floors below. As he passed through his outer office he gave the girl at the switchboard a dozen numbers, with orders to connect them with his private phone as fast as she could get them.

A short, sharp question, an equally short, decisive answer from each man whom he called, told him all that he needed to know. The men were leaders and masters of the Assembly. They were all of one mind. The Governor was not to be impeached. The legislature would not interfere with the Governor's acts in Milton.

It meant that the Governor was to be allowed to run John Sargent's mill until he should bankrupt it, or until he should be forced to cut wages. In either case, it would serve two purposes. It would show that the Socialist idea of government ownership of productive industries was farcical. It would put a ridiculous end to Gordon Fuller's career.

John Sargent was to be merely the negligible victim of it all. His fortune, his plant, the life work of his father and himself, was to be thrown out, like a piece of red meat, to stop for a moment the onrush of the pursuing wolf, Socialism.

Sargent remembered a story he had once read of five unarmed men in a sleigh being pursued by timber-wolves. When the pack came too close, four of the men threw the fifth, the weakest, out to the wolves, to stop them. The pursuit was delayed, but it came on again. Twice more the weakest man remaining was thrown out, until only two were left. These two struggled, each trying to give himself the last chance of safety, until, just as they were near a village and help, they fell locked together, back into the pack.

It was not a pretty story, and it was altogether improbable. But John Sargent thought of it for a long time. Out of his thinking, he came to an illuminating conclusion. His whole life had been based on a mistake. He had lived and thought and acted out his life as a member of a class, the Capitalist class. As a member of that class he was bound to conserve and preserve things that are, *as they are,* in order that wealth and brains and responsible power might keep the world in its appointed course.

Now he reasoned: There is no such thing as a class of wealthy, powerful men. The very things that make them wealthy and powerful *force* them to fight to crush each other. The process of combination and elimination will go on till there are just two really wealthy men in the country. Then, *they will throw each other to the pack.*

He went to his house that night and made his

will. No. He was not going to die. It was an astonishing will. The attorney who drew it made no comment, except to register mentally that, in spite of the will, John Sargent was of sound mind.

Later John Sargent boarded the Adirondack Limited. He was going back to Milton for a last fight. He was going to fight that mysterious power, personified in Father Driscoll, which had baffled him. He was going to fight Gordon Fuller. He was going to fight Jasper Macon and what he had called his own class.

Against the first two of his foes he had no bitterness. He would fight as the lone stag fights—because he is a fighter.

Against the last, against Jasper Macon and his class, he could not lose. That astonishing will would carry on his fight for a century.

CHAPTER X

FATHER LYNCH'S WISDOM

"THE Governor did wrong," Father Lynch pronounced.

He spoke without haste and without prejudice. His manner, as he settled back in his chair and critically picked out a match from the box at his elbow, told his neighbors that while he expected further argument, and would perforce listen to it, his judgment would stand.

For fifteen minutes Father Huetter explained, argued, and reasoned with brilliancy and ardor. He showed how the Governor had from the beginning acted with prudence and firmness and from the simplest and clearest of motives. His action had averted violence and bloodshed. It had shown that government could be, after all, efficient and real. And, finally, it had brought John Sargent to terms and had shown a way for the speedy settlement of all future strikes in the country. All this and more the young priest advanced and proved.

When Father Huetter had quite exhausted his arguments and his enthusiasm, Father Lynch repeated his decision in exactly the same words,

but with an added air of judicial calmness and certitude.

He had the highest respect for the young man's learning, and loved him for the fresh, eager, young heart that he brought to the service of God and of the queer, outlandish peoples among whom he worked. But Father Huetter had received education in such unseemly places as Naples and Cracow. Moreover, he collogued openly and in their own tongues with Italians and Poles and Czechs and what not. Moreover, he was young. Father Lynch made excuse for him on all three grounds. These things did not fit a man to know the real motives of men. He held his ground placidly, and waited for the Dean to take up the argument.

"It may be we're too confident, Father Patrick," said the old Dean in mild-mannered guile. "What should the Governor have done?"

"I am not his adviser," Father Lynch reminded the Dean, with a broad smile.

He did not propose to leave his secure seat as judge, to be heckled as a witness.

"I say he did you all wrong; neither more nor less."

For twenty-five years now Father Lynch had been coming down once a month from his rather lonely hills for a few hours of talk with the Dean.

He always came in hurried and a trifle out of breath, explaining that he had had business in Milton and now had barely time to catch his train

for home. It would not be worth while to sit down—he would just shake hands and run. In fact, he should not have taken the time to come in at all, but he did not dare come to town and go away without paying his respects to the Dean's house. Before he would have the explanation finished the Dean would have him comfortably seated, but still protesting.

This formula was never varied, and in the years it had come almost to the dignity of a ritual. When Father Huetter came he took his part in the ceremony with all the solemnity of an acolyte.

If the Dean met Father Lynch on the street, as sometimes happened, then the matter was more serious. At twenty paces distance Father Lynch broke into what was almost, but not quite, a run. He was in luck! he panted. He would not have to go all the way up to the house. He would not have had time to make it anyway. Now the Dean could just walk on down to the station with him and they could talk on the way.

He would grasp the Dean's hand and begin tugging him in the direction of the station. The Dean would stand and pull as firmly the other way. Then more explanations and apologies. Father Lynch was distressed. He was sorry. But he must make that train. A thousand things depended on it! In the end the Dean would put one great hand under the smaller

man's elbow and propel him bodily up the street in the direction of the deanery.

It is of record that Mrs. Mary Normile was one morning chatting in a neighbor's kitchen, when she heard an uproar in her own house across the yard. It seems that the Dean had been passing, and seeing the door open had walked in through the house. In the kitchen he came upon Teresa Normile, aged seven, and her brother, a year younger, going through a grave and lifelike imitation of a meeting on the street between Dean Driscoll and Father Lynch. Seeing Father Driscoll in the doorway, young Terrence Normile put up the pipes to cry. But his sister, a quicker and better judge of facial expressions, looked up slyly, finger in mouth, at the Dean—and grinned. Confidence being thus established, the Dean got them to go over the whole performance from the beginning. He had the satisfaction of seeing himself mimicked to an eyelash by the perfectly respectful and painstaking Teresa, while Terrence portrayed Father Lynch with more flourish but less truth.

His roars of laughter disturbed Mrs. Normile from her morning chat. As she came running up on to the side porch the children bolted through the back door. The Dean, thus basely deserted, and weak from laughing, fled incontinently through the front door. He was still laughing when he reached home. But he would not tell Father Huetter the tale. Father Huet-

ter went out that afternoon and returned with six different versions of the matter.

Father Lynch never came to Milton without some ostensible and plausible reason of business. But his real business on these visits was to hear of the doings of the Dean during the month past and to sit in chancery upon them. Long ago he had made himself censor in ordinary to the Dean, as regarded the things of this world. In matters of the Kingdom of Heaven, in the realm of conscience, the Dean was his perfect man, walking with God.

But in his dealings with men, in his judgment of motives and effects, Father Lynch felt that the Dean needed supervision. He was constantly being imposed upon. He saw good in all men and all things. His hand and heart were open to the flimsiest and most barefaced tale of wandering misfortune.

It is all well for him to be a saint—Father Lynch argued—and walk with his head in Heaven. But where would he be these twenty-five years without me?

"He did you all wrong," the judge repeated aggressively, seeing that the Dean would not be drawn out to argument. "The Governor should never have given Sargent back possession of his mill or removed the troops from it until Sargent had given a bond to accept and keep the terms between the men and himself which the Governor's board of arbitration may name."

"Oh, that was not needed," said the Dean easily. "Sargent is glad enough to get his mill back at any terms. He is bound by his word, given and published, to do whatever his man and the Governor's man and the representative of the strikers agree upon."

"His *word!* you say?"

"No," said the Dean, answering the sarcasm in Father Lynch's tone, "he would not dare face the storm of public condemnation that would fall on him if he broke his word."

"How do you know what he would face? How do you know what desperate straits he was in when he gave in to the Governor? Why *did* he give in? You do not know. Neither do I. But there is something bad, very bad, to come of it. Mark me. That man has a bad eye. Did I not see him kick the little man in the street?"

The Dean did not answer. He looked speculatively and a little anxiously at Father Huetter; and he saw that his young assistant was impressed as he himself was. Father Lynch did not purposely look for the bad side of men and things. He sometimes saw men worse than they really were; but not often, the Dean reflected sadly; not often.

"The Governor has gained by the whole business," Father Lynch went on. "He has come well out of it all. He drew the eyes of the whole country to himself. He did a spectacular and what looked like a daring thing. The country is

ready to love a man who does things like that. He has put himself above his party and into a place where he cannot be ignored; and now he is safely out of it all. He need not worry about the final outcome. The country is tired hearing of your strike by now, anyhow. He has got the advertising and the reputation out of it. Now he has withdrawn his soldiers and his people and left your men again at the mercy of John Sargent.

"I tell you, Dean, you did a great thing for Governor Gordon Fuller when you put him on the way to what he did."

"I did not do it. I was not able," answered the Dean, shaking his head. "John Sargent himself, by his insolence, angered the Governor into doing what I could not persuade him to do."

"He would not have thought of it if you had not fired his imagination and his ambition with the idea, before Sargent got to him."

"I hope that you are not altogether right, Father Patrick," said the Dean slowly. "I like to think that the young Governor did what he has done because he thought it the right and the brave thing to do."

"At least," said Father Huetter, coming back to the charge, "the Governor by his action proved one thing—a thing that people in this country had begun to doubt. He proved that the Government is really supreme over every pri-

vate interest in the State. He has shown the way. He has proved that government has the power and the duty to interfere in economic conflicts such as this and to force a fair compromise.

"He has knocked on the head the superstition that strikes, battles between Capital and Labor, are sacred duels, in which no one dare interfere. Why, from the attitude of this country during the last twenty-five years, an outsider would think that Labor and Capital in a strike were two 'bad men' meeting in a frontier town, who must be allowed to shoot their fight out in a crowded street no matter who else might be hurt.

"It is futile," the young priest went on, "for us to complain of what Capital does. And Labor will always fight for all it can get. Shall we blame it? But, we support a government that is bound to be able, and to show itself able, to hold these two great forces in line and make them work together for the good of all.

"Here is the trouble. Here is why we have unrest and suspicion and class hatred amongst us. Here is where social revolution, Socialism and Anarchy, make head among us. It is not because Capital is greedy. It is not because Labor is lawless. It is because many people believe that government, as we have it constituted, is incompetent to deal with its problems.

"Once show them that government is really

able to do things, that it can bring the worker and the employer together and measure justice to both of them, then you will hear no more of social upheaval.

"The Governor has shown that this can be done. He has moved us a great step toward the end of our economic struggle. If government can do this thing, then it can, step by step, bring about every social and economic readjustment that the country needs.

"There is nothing the matter with the country except that our thought and our actions have been numbered by certain fetishes and hoary superstitions about sacred rights. The Governor has shown that these can be dealt with. If he has gained something for himself out of it, let him have it, I say."

Father Lynch listened calmly to the end. Then he reached forward and, shaking a solemn, warning finger at the Dean, he spoke his mind.

"You have too plagued much education around this house, Dean: I always said it."

The Dean chuckled. Father Huetter threw out his hands and sat down, laughing and perspiring. He and Father Lynch were of widely different schools and different times, but he never made the mistake of underrating the value of the older man's shrewd insight into men and things.

Having thus cleared away the ground, Father Lynch proceeded to analyze the case soberly and slowly.

"I don't like it at all, at all," he said. "You young men"—he turned to Father Huetter—"study from books and you talk and think from books, mostly. I—and shame for me!—do not read all I ought.

"You are taught to see men by groups or classes, as you think of them. You believe that certain men, having certain common interests, work and act together on certain common principles, for a common good at the end. I don't believe it. I never did.

"You think of two men as two molders, or two bookkeepers, or two mill-owners; and you think of them as acting alike because they work at the same things. It is not so. They are not two this or two that. Each of them is a man. And a man is the only being of all God's creation that is absolutely alone. He has no instincts to keep him acting with a class or a herd. He does what he does by himself and for himself; and does it for the motive that lies in his heart just at that moment. You must find the motive before you talk of what he does.

"Find me John Sargent's motive. Tell me why he gave in to the Governor. And I will tell you what is to come of it."

"Well," said the Dean reflectively, "he must have become discouraged and convinced that he was beaten. I do not wonder. He appeared here one morning and walked up to the mill. A soldier stopped him at the gate of his own mill

and would not let him enter. He walked out, the men say, into the middle of the road and stood, almost on the spot where Harry Loyd died, looking up and down at the mill for a long time. Then he turned and walked back to the station. He did not speak to a soul in the town.

"I think he knew himself for a beaten man."

"*I* do not," said Father Lynch decisively. "A thing like that would make him wild with rage. It is just the thing that would not let him give up. He expected it anyway. No. And you are not telling me all," he accused the Dean abruptly. "Where did the Governor get the money?"

"That is a mystery," the Dean admitted.

"A mystery?" Father Lynch sat up and eyed the Dean with severity. "Dean," he said, "you are an older man than I. Now I have known money to *go* mysteriously. Mine goes that way. Yours does not, for some prodigal son is always waiting around to take it from you for his fare home, before you really know that you have it." (The Dean's failings in this direction were a standing grievance to Father Lynch, and the subject of many a monthly review.)

"But, I put you on your word as an older man," Father Lynch went on sternly, "did you ever know money to *come* that way—mysteriously, out of nowhere?"

"You are quite right, Father Patrick," the

Dean agreed. "It does not come that way. But I do not quite see—"

"Two weeks ago," Father Lynch pursued his argument, regardless of what the Dean saw or did not see, "on the first pay-day, I am told that the Governor did not have and could not get money to pay the men. I am also told that on that evening you did incite the women here to redeem his worthless pay-checks by force. From a man of peace, Dean," he observed sadly, "you are falling into violence in your old days. But I do not believe *that* charge—so I will take another day for it.

"Shortly after that," he began again on the main case, "it appears that the Governor found money, not only to pay the men but also to buy materials. And, what is more, he found a market for the machines that were being turned out.

"Now, according to your arguments, Father Huetter, he could not get it from a rich man. No rich man would furnish money for the purpose of beating another rich man, a man of his own class; and John Sargent is, or was, a rich man. But, I submit to you, learned sir, that it was more money than a poor man, with a decent respect for his own class, would have about him. And, a poor man would not be able to open markets which John Sargent had closed up tight. I think it must have been a rich man. If I am wrong, I hope to be corrected," he added with beaming urbanity.

"I guess you are safe," laughed Father Huetter.

"Then this follows," said Father Lynch, again assuming his magisterial rôle, "John Sargent found that he had an enemy; a big enemy, a rich enemy, a man bigger and richer than himself. That day you tell of, he went away from here to fight that enemy."

Father Lynch sat back and folded his arms. He had spoken.

"I do not think I understand," said the Dean slowly. Father Lynch's nimble short cuts to a conclusion often left the Dean some distance behind. "He has given up the fight."

"You were never more mistaken in your life, Dean. He has not given up. He has made a truce with the Governor and the men, because he found that a bigger enemy—of his own class—was fighting him from behind.

"Now you tell me," he went on, "that since he agreed to accept the Governor's terms and is back running the mill again he is running it as it was never run before. You tell me that he is to run it night and day, that he will soon be using almost double the force that he used before. What is he trying to do? Probably he will try to flood the market with machinery. I hear it's none too good now. Maybe that other man will lose money, a lot of it, if the prices of machinery suddenly fall.

"When he gave in to the Governor the way

he did, he was striking at his whole class, as you call it. Every rich man says now he is a traitor and a coward, that he should have held out.

"Maybe, he has found that he has no class. I am not sure."

This in itself, coming from Father Lynch, was a statement so unusual that it sounded heretical. The Dean and Father Huetter were alarmed and dumfounded. When he leaned forward, hesitating, and lost in a patient struggle with his judgments, they were honestly concerned. But it was an affair so beyond the memory and the ken of man that neither had any suggestion to offer.

"You that live in crowded towns," Father Lynch began finally, with an evident effort, "you look at men in groups. There are so many around you that you cannot study the individual. You have to rank them into classes. And you judge them and their actions by the class into which you put them. In the hills it is different. There we have time to see what is in the face of a man, before another comes along.

"Now I have looked into the eye of John Sargent. I said he had a bad eye. Maybe I would not say bad, just. But there is a mark in his eye that makes him dangerous. It is the mark of revenge. Other passions he may have, I do not doubt. But the one ravaging fury of that man's heart is revenge.

"From his grave," he added solemnly, "that

man would strike back for revenge. I see it in his eye."

Father Huetter was puzzled. This was a Father Lynch that he had never before seen.

The Dean, however, understood better. Still, he was not able to agree fully. Guardedly he protested:

"You might well be right, Father Patrick. But he cannot strike anywhere without hurting himself, in money. And money is his soul and his god. It may be that revenge is the strongest slant of his character. I would not doubt your reading. But money has grown into his heart. I have heard that man rave about the loss of money, frantically, madly, as though his life blood were being drawn. No. I do not think that any passion can now come between his heart and money. He cannot strike. He is bound."

"I am right," said Father Lynch, unmoved. "You shall see it."

"I do not know why," said the Dean absently, "but I always feel strangely about that man."

His face was turned to the window. The sharp, piercing look of his strong old eyes softened to a deep, gentle radiance of wonder and faith unbounded. The light in them was the light of his Vision above the gray line of the hills, the light of the Promise, of Infinite Peace.

"Strong, ruthless, cruel!" he said in a whis-

per. "He has been all these, coining the lives of men and women and children. Uncounted wrongs lie at his door. He has walked rough-shod on a suffering people.

"But, I know little children that are taught to pray to God for John Sargent, that He will change him and make him better to them and theirs. And where men and women have suffered was not every pain of theirs a prayer to God to change John Sargent?

"This is still God Almighty's world.

"I believe! I believe that He will not take John Sargent from it without first wringing from him some great good!"

Father Lynch sat silent and bowed. His jurisdiction over the Dean was ended when the latter came to the things of the Kingdom of Heaven.

In the silence, Father Huetter rose and slipped from the room upon some errand of the day's work.

The Dean turned slowly back from the window. When he spoke, the exaltation had gone from his tone. His voice and his eyes were those of an old man, tired and shaken.

"God gives me strength. He gives me the light of faith. And yet I am troubled and sick of heart. Patrick—I—am I a faithless man, that I cannot hold up my heart and believe always?"

The anguish in the old Dean's voice brought Father Lynch to his feet on the instant. Never before, in all the years, had he known his friend to falter.

" 'Tis nothing, Dean. 'Tis nothing," he hastened to explain. "You have been wearing yourself out these weeks past, without rest. I'll warrant you've been sitting up half these nights, and not tasting your food, too," he scolded. "You are tired now, and your head is heavy. 'Twill pass, 'twill pass."

Solicitous and full of comfort, Father Lynch bustled about the room, now pushing a chair into its exact place, now straightening a book, now stopping to fleck off a speck of dust from the table. The Dean watched these tactics of his friend and a smile of grateful understanding came stealing over his face. When he saw Father Lynch beginning a second time at the chairs, he said:

"That will do, Patrick, and—thank you. The chairs needed it; and so did I."

Father Lynch understood. His friend's cloud had lifted, suddenly, as it had fallen. He sat down in confusion, and very deliberately examined his watch.

"You have time yet," said the Dean. "You did not say all that was in your mind—about Sargent and the future. I would hear all."

"What need have you to listen to my blatherings?" Father Lynch was eager to dis-

credit himself. The business of a prophet of evil is a thankless one in the end; and he did not propose to take it up again.

But the Dean insisted:

"You said some things that were too true to be passed over. Tell me what you think."

Thus adjured, Father Lynch saw that there was no escape. But he did not now resume the chair of judge. He spoke very slowly and with a manner of cautious and hesitating diffidence.

"I hope I am wrong, Dean. I ought to be wrong. But I think John Sargent now feels that he has scores to settle with many people. The men have fought him to a bitter end. He feels that he has fed and clothed them for years and that, when they thought themselves able, they tried to ruin him. Jim Loyd fought him most of all, and he will try to convict him and give him a State's prison term.

"The Governor, he thinks, took an unfair and unlawful advantage of him—for political capital—at a time when he was already in grave trouble.

"What will he do? He will—as he is now doing—rush through all the machinery possible, to get money and to strike at the secret enemy who furnished the Governor with money against him. He will fight that enemy first. Then, when he has breathing space, he will turn upon the Governor. He will snap his finger at his board of arbitration. It will be the dead of winter by

then. The men will not dare to strike again. He will leave the Governor looking foolish and ridiculous in the eyes of the State and country.

"You say he is bringing in hundreds of new men and breaking them in," he went on. "He will have more than he needs. Who is to prevent him from discharging his old men by the wholesale?

"He is not convinced. He is not beaten. He will mark time till winter is down upon you. Winter is his friend—the only one he counts upon.

"Meantime he will use every ounce of his power to put Loyd away permanently.

"And, Dean," he concluded, dropping his voice, "remember this: that man hates you and blames you. He cannot hurt you. But he will try."

"Dear God! I would do the man every good in my power!"

"True," Father Lynch admitted. "As I said before, a man is a creature altogether alone and by himself. No other man can tell what one thinks and feels. It may be that the very fact that he knows you once saved his life—I saw it—and that he knows you would do him good is the very thing that he holds hardest against you.

"The heart of a man," he concluded, "goes in a queer and unbelievable way, when once it is set toward the wrong."

He rose briskly, watch in hand.

"I must be gone. There's a new conductor on Number Seven and he thinks he must leave Milton on time, no matter what time he gets us home. Joe Conley, that's gone, always gave us fifteen or twenty extra minutes here, and made up the time on the curves. What matter if he did put us into the ditch once in the year or so?"

"Oh, you'll have plenty of time," said the Dean, rising slowly and stiffly. "I'll walk with you to the station."

"On my word! I believe you're afraid I'd take up a collection on the way if you let me walk to the station alone."

The joke was venerable with twenty-five years' usage between them. But the Dean laughed boyishly and explained that there was supper in the house for only two, so that it was policy for him to see that Father Lynch *did* actually get aboard his train.

The Dean shook hands with his guest at the step of the train, as Number Seven, on time, was moving away from the platform. He walked away from the station with a slow step, giving only a mechanical return to the people who saluted him by the way.

All day he had been feeling rather depressed, and Father Lynch's talk had done much to deepen the feeling.

Where he had been counting upon a lasting solution of all the difficulties which for years had threatened the peace and happiness of his peo-

ple, he now saw that nothing had really been solved. Where he had seen a prosperous and industrious winter before them, he now realized that they were more fully and helplessly at the mercy of John Sargent than they had ever been.

Lost in thought, he turned into Lake Street and then down Reynold Street. So that before he noticed it he was standing at the door of the low red building where Jim Loyd was in jail.

Fred Wheeler, the warden, admitted him.

"Loyd? Why, of course you can see him, Father. Only, Mr. Sargent is in there, in the office, with him now."

"Sargent? Here? To see Jimmie Loyd?"

"Funny thing, ain't it, Father? He's been here before. And it ain't a guilty conscience, either. He ain't troubled that way. I dunno—Loyd seems to have some kind of a fascination over that man. Sargent can't leave him alone."

"I would like to go in while he's there," said the Dean. "See if he has any objection, Fred."

In a moment Wheeler returned, to say that the Dean might go into the inner office.

Loyd rose from the table and greeted the Dean quietly. Sargent was walking about the room. He wheeled sharply as the old priest came in, and for an instant the two looked curiously at each other.

"I would not intrude," said the Dean quickly, realizing that it was a strange and strained mo-

ment. "I have no business here that could not wait."

"It does not matter," said Sargent shortly. "I am trying to make this man do something for his own good. But it doesn't seem to be any use. I am telling him that I will have this whole case against him dropped, if he will give his word to leave Milton then and never come back."

The Dean thought rapidly, and decided upon a frontal attack.

"Aside from the fact," he said, "that he is not guilty, and that you, Mr. Sargent, know too well who *is* guilty, how do you know that he would keep his word?"

"Of course he'd keep his word. He always does. *You* told me that."

The Dean started. That terrible night, when he had told Sargent *Jim Loyd pays his debts,* came crowding back upon him. But he drove it back, and went on to his purpose.

"Will you keep *your* word—to the Governor?"

Sargent was stunned. For an instant a numbing superstition caught him. How did this man know the plans of his mind before he himself had them formed? Then all the baffled rage of months of humiliation and defeat broke out.

"Who are you?" he shouted, striding across the room. "What are you, that you can pick the meat out of my brains? Everywhere I go, you meet me. Every move I make, you are ahead of me to block it!"

The Dean leaned against the edge of the table, looking calmly down at the man in front of him. This coolness seemed to drive Sargent from his last hold of self-control.

"No!" he fairly screamed. "I will not keep my word to the Governor! I will never again keep word or faith with any living man!

"I thought I was a man," he began again, "living among men, working among men. I thought I lived and worked among men who worked and fought for the same things that I worked and fought for. I thought I belonged to a class—gentlemen, we called ourselves—that had interests in common. I thought we were working for common protection, for the country, for prosperity, for civilization.

"It's rot! It's all a lie!

"There is no country. There is no civilization. I am as much alone now as if I was back in the first forest, with a stone club, stalking my first beast. I have been a triple-ringed idiot, and I have just found it out.

"I will go my own way from now. Why should I have pity or faith, or thought for any man? I will lie. I will trick and throw every man that has put a hand against me.

"I thought I had friends, men of what I called my own kind, who were with me in a fair fight. I could have fought you all, Governor and all. But those men, my own kind, came behind me to assassinate me.

"I will beat *them* first. I will run that mill till it groans, till the machines fly to pieces, to beat them.

"I have tricked the Governor now, and when it is time I will laugh in his face—and make the country laugh at him.

"Then I will come here. Milton is my town. I will drive from it every man who has fought me. Loyd, here, will go and all the rest.

"But *you,* you will be the first. I swear it! You, with your preaching of peace and patience, you will be the first!"

"As God wills," answered the Dean quietly. "But you, Mr. Sargent, you should not excite yourself so."

"Are you taunting me with that again? Are you? Yes, I am going to die. Are you trying to shake your red rag of Hell-fire at me? Are you trying to scare me with that?"

"It was the last thing in my thought, Mr. Sargent. Nevertheless—"

"Where would this man Loyd be to-day, if you had not stopped him? Where would this whole strike have been months ago, if they had not had you to preach wisdom and patience and endurance to them? I could have harried them into rioting and madness and then have crushed them like an eggshell. But there you were, preaching peace and everlasting, gray cunning to them.

"And why do you do it? Because you think to drive your Church in as a wedge, a wedge be-

tween Anarchy and all the tearing forces below and Capitalism and all the grinding powers above—to save the country that way.

"Country or no country, you have been my strongest enemy. You will be the first to go. I will—"

For an instant the old priest had taken his eyes from Sargent while he ranted.

The other man was stealing round the corner of the table toward Sargent. Furtive of eye, hairy of face, he moved with the strained, vibrating stealth of a gaunt panther preparing to leap.

Dear God! Could that be Jimmie Loyd? Could a few weeks of jail have done that to him? Not so would the Jimmie Loyd whom he had known go to his enemy!

Even in his horror, the Dean acted swiftly. He grasped Sargent by the arm and swung him round, so that his own wide body was between the two men. Then, with a grip that told of the giant strength of his younger days, he almost lifted his man to the door, and, opening it, pushed him through; saying but one word:

"Go!"

With his back against the door, the Dean looked at Loyd. He had dropped back loosely into his chair, and his head fell inert on his chest. The Dean crossed the room and laid a hand on Loyd's shoulder.

"Jimmie," he said, "I have seen sorrow; and you have lain with sorrow. But, of all the men

that I have ever known, that man just gone needs pity most. Think, think a while, and you will see."

Loyd answered not at all, but reached up and took the hand on his shoulder in a grasp that would have crushed any other hand.

"Can he hurt you, Father?" he asked presently. "Because, if he can, I will go, or do anything he—"

"Jimmie," the Dean interrupted, "have you listened to me all these years and do not know that no man can hurt you or me? If we do wrong or do foolishly, then we can be hurt, not otherwise."

Then Wheeler came in.

Father Huetter, supper, and a long-suffering housekeeper were all waiting for the Dean when he came home.

As he walked in to the waiting table, he avoided the accusing eye of the housekeeper and hastened to create a diversion.

"Did you ever wonder, Father Huetter," he said blandly, as though he had never in his life kept a meal waiting, "where Father Lynch goes to school for his uncommon knowledge of men and their hearts?"

The housekeeper, feeling herself outgeneraled, retired scornfully.

Father Huetter, while he smiled at the unspoken duel, answered:

"Well, they say he only reads one book outside of Mass and Office. But that book is the Douay Bible. I believe he knows the half of it by heart."

"Yes, I guess that *is* the answer," agreed the Dean. "No new thing has happened to a human heart since that Book was written."

CHAPTER XI

"FUEL OF THE FIRE"

"THE man has gone rank, raving mad, Dean; there is no other explanation," said Father Huetter.

"It must be very bad," agreed the Dean, "from all I hear."

"Bad? Why, do you know, he's actually driving that mill up to nearly two hundred per cent. of its capacity. Finnegan and Dryden both told me that—and they are men who know. He is driving so that the very main shaft of the mill is shaking in its blocks.

"He has had a cot set up in his private office and he eats and lives there, but he does not sleep anywhere. They say he is out through the mill night and day, rushing here and there, and driving, driving, driving like a demon, to get the last ounce of power out of the machines, the last minute of work and endurance out of the men."

"I have not been near the mill since the night when young Harry Loyd was killed," said the Dean. "I could not bear the sight of it."

"No. And we cannot do the slightest good. That is the pitiful part of it. Even the things that you have done, the men did not always un-

derstand them or know how to take them. And Sargent thinks that every move you have made has been made as a direct attack upon him."

"From my heart," the Dean returned, "I am sorry for that man. He has the threat of death upon him and there is a canker in his soul that eats and eats, and drives him on faster and faster toward the end. God alone knows what the end will be: madness or death, or the two together.

"In this room, on that night I spoke of, I reminded John Sargent of Cain. Within an hour from that, he heard the cry that Cain echoed to God. 'Every man that should see him would kill him.' And—for the first time in his life, I believe—he was afraid.

"From that time his heart has been able to see nothing but 'every man's hand against him.' It is not an excuse. There is no question of excuse. But think, Father. Think of a soul turned loose against the world, like that! Think of a soul that knows not God at all, and knows men only as enemies! Think of the best and wisest man you ever knew. Take from him his God. Then take from him his faith and trust in all other men. What would he do? Can you tell to what bad and cruel lengths he would go?"

"But this man is a criminal lunatic," said Father Huetter. "The men are getting to be superstitious. Even the hardest rushers among the piece workers, though they are being made to earn more just now than ever before in their

lives—men who were always complaining that the machines ran too slow—they are getting afraid of him. It is simply frightful. He has crowded men, new and old, trained and green, into that great blast-room until it is nothing but a pit of flaming life-traps. Men are working there knee to knee and shoulder to shoulder, under a terrible pressure of hurry, with only inches between them and death in the gears, with only a single step between them and most horrible death in molten iron.

"And he has crowded new girls and new winders into the twine mill so closely that the timid ones among the women go almost mad from standing hours and hours in a single cramped position, not daring to move. While the heedless ones take terrible chances every minute, for the sake of a little ease.

"It's so bad that every operating job in that mill to-day is a criminal risk. I tell you it's a frightful thing that a man like him—he's criminally insane, nothing short of it—should ever have such power over men and women!"

"It is," the Dean agreed sadly. "No doubt, it is a terrible thing that any man should have such a measure of power over his fellow-men. It has been said that no man is good enough and wise enough to govern another man. And all human records seem to bear out the statement.

"Do you remember, Father, that in all the struggles of men for liberty they have never

asked for any positive thing, always a negative thing. When they have fought and died for charities and constitutions and laws, they were never wanting to strengthen the existing power. They were always seeking to curb it, to bind it, to protect themselves against it. Men seem to have agreed always that no power, no man, no set or succession of men, would ever be wise and good enough to govern absolutely.

"All this regarded political power only. How much less, then, is any man, however sane and wise, to be trusted with the power of bread and life over men? That is the power which John Sargent wields here. I suppose no man is fit to have such power.

"And yet," he concluded slowly, "dependence, to some extent at least, is the lot of more than nine-tenths of all men. Nearly every man living is in some way dependent on another man."

"But it should not be so: it need not be so," said Father Huetter. "There is nothing inherent in human nature that would make it so. God never meant it to be so, for He puts men into the world practically equal. The individual differences of heredity and environment are really trifling in the long run. Every day we see men climb swiftly over them."

"They *do* climb over them," said the Dean; "and it is that one fact, I believe, that holds our American industrial system together. Our workingmen, with the temper they have, would

not go on working as they do under our conditions if each one did not in his heart believe that he can someway, somehow, climb out of the place he is in. That hope is the mainspring of American action. By it our civilization keeps running on."

"But the hope is false, and a delusion!" cried Father Huetter. "What chance have they? What chance have our men here in Milton of ever being anything but what they are? This country may once have been the land of individual opportunity; but that was a time when the unopened resources of the land lay free to all. It was before organized capital had spread its smothering blanket over the country to choke the breath of individual independence. Our people do not know it, but they are rapidly and surely being molded into classes where they will have to stay, as fixed as are the peasant and working classes of Europe. Their hope of rising out of their place is no longer a hope. It is an outworn American tradition. Our people will one day awaken to this, and their awakening will be a terrible one."

"True or false," said the Dean, "it will take many lessons to make our people believe that hard work and thrift and good sense will not get them what they want. And if they cannot get it for themselves they will still believe that they can procure what they want for their children. And that is, after all, the biggest thing in their hearts.

"And they are not so deluded as you might think. Every man, like every woman, has one secret thing in his heart that he wants above all other things. If he gets that thing, you will not find him worrying about whether he belongs to a class or does not. He will not care. For when he gets the one thing on which his heart is set, he knows that he belongs to the class of the kings of the earth—the men who have made their heart's dream come true.

"And they get the secret big wish of their hearts oftener than you would think. For you can never tell what it may be.

"Do you know Dennis O'Leary? You do, of course. Now, for thirty years Dennis has stood day in and day out down in the lowest wheelpit of John Sargent's mill, half to his waist in water. In summer the water is warm. In winter it is ice cold. So far as Dennis O'Leary knows, or cares, those are the only changes in the Labor situation in this country.

"Twenty-five years ago," he went on, "the night young Aloysius O'Leary was born, Dennis O'Leary decided that he would one day be able to walk down State Street and see the words Aloysius O'Leary, Attorney at Law, on an office sign. For all those years, until last summer, he looked down into the water as it boiled away from the tail of the wheel and saw nothing but those words. Every freezing that he got in the

water, every twinge of the rheumatism that has crimped his legs and bent his spine, went into the making of that sign that you know is up now on State Street.

"Now he walks eight blocks out of his way after the late Mass on Sunday, and makes himself late for his dinner, to pass by and read the letters on that sign. He wishes they were seven feet tall.

"Then he goes home to his dinner. And if the young Attorney dares to assume any airs, the old man tells him, 'Twere fitter for you to be earnin' an honest livin' like your betters.'

"But, I say, Dennis O'Leary is one of the kings of the earth. You have to make way for him—a man who has made his dream come true!

"You could tell him that the country is fast going to the dogs—and he would agree with you. You might tell him that it is foolish for a man to work hard and honestly when so many rogues get the best of everything—and he would say you were right. But you cannot tell him that a man cannot get what he wants in this country if he is willing to fight away and work for it.

"There are thousands, millions I might say, of Dennis O'Learys among our working people. Their lives hold just one, big longing for a certain thing. Give them that or let them see their way to it and they care little about what class they belong to.

"Socialism or any other 'ism' may cry out to them to work and vote and fight as a class—the working class. But they will never do it. They have no class. They refuse to be conscious of any class. They are willing to work to the bone for just their one big thing. Getting that, they count their lives well spent. Failing that, their lives are empty. They carry their disappointment to the grave.

"But they do not succeed or fail as a class. They are not happy or unhappy as a class. They are too sturdy, too individual, to ever live or think or act as a class.

"That is why Socialism, the Social Revolution, will never be able to array them as a class against the order of things.

"Maybe it is a weakness in them, collectively; but it is their character. It is what their blood and America, together, make them. They stand or fall by it."

"That is the thoughtless and heartless American blunder!" said the young priest warmly.

"Look at our working people as they are today! Ninety-nine men out of every hundred have to go on working with their hands from youth to death! Ninety-five boys out of every hundred have to leave school and start over the road that their fathers have gone! And yet, just because one strong man or five lucky boys get a chance for something easier, the whole ninety-

nine go on believing that there is a chance for them and theirs. It is pitiful! It is a ghastly farce and a delusion!

"They will not act or work for themselves, for their kind, because every one of them is secretly hugging to his heart the slim hope that he may be the one out of a hundred that shall climb away from his fellows.

"That fallacy, that delusion, is the one thing that is holding back the Social Revolution. All that Socialism needs to-day is a leader great enough and honest enough to really awaken these men from their dream. When they awake, religion and in particular the Catholic Church will be the first thing to suffer. They will look back at us to say: 'You knew we were deluding ourselves; you knew we had no chance; yet you went on preaching thrift and ambition, patience and endurance to us. Why did you do it?'

"Three thousand men worked all day to-day for John Sargent. Two thousand more are working all night to-night. How many of them will ever be anything but what they are? How many of them will ever have anything but what they have? Yet every one of them is hugging to his heart that false and lying hope, that he can somehow rise above his fellows.

"And what are they? What are they? Fuel of the fire! Fuel of the fire of John Sargent's madness!"

He stopped short, and his face broke into a good-natured smile at his own heat.

"Forgive me, Dean," he said in confusion. "I —I really didn't intend to make a speech here to-night."

But Father Driscoll did not smile. He looked gravely at his young assistant, and said simply:

"My boy, there is nothing to apologize for. I have lived through the times and the conditions that have made the American working-people what they are. I am as they are. I think as they think.

"You come with a newer, fresher, point of view. It may well be that your sight is better than mine.

"My generation of priests had its hands full picking up the scattered elements of Catholicity in this country and holding them together and building them up into what we now have. Our work is done, and we are going fast.

"Your generation has bigger, wider problems before it than mine had. God sparing you to my age, you will see more striking changes than I have seen. I believe that the next fifty years in this country will be more lastingly decisive for the Church of Christ than any fifty years that she has seen.

"But, after all, future as well as past, there is but one answer to every question, one solution to every problem—the Grace and the eternal, abiding Wisdom of Christ. If you had not that with

you, your generation of priests in this country might well tremble at the tasks and perils before you.

"I do not know how it will work out. But I remember this from history: every convulsion of the world, every great, seething crisis of humanity has, ultimately, worked out for the good of Catholicity. The Church has never really suffered from conflict or agitation. She emerges stronger out of every struggle. Too much security, with its consequent stagnation, has ever been the one thing to hurt her.

"A social and economic readjustment of the power and wealth of this country is coming. Every thinking man sees that it is inevitable. If it can only be brought about through the bitter struggle that you foresee, then the Catholic Church will suffer, of course.

"But, of all organized religion, she alone will live through the struggle. She will stand alone. Then will be her opportunity—and her test. It will be the only fair test she has had in modern life. It will be grand! 'Twill be heart-lifting! I see it! The grandest, the most telling fight for Christ's Kingdom that's ever been made.

"Dear man!" he broke out, "do you know the privilege that's yours! Oh, to be young! To have a mind trained for it as yours is—and the courage! And to have a battle like this ready made for you to throw hand and heart and soul into it!

"I wish I could throw back the years. But no," he said, catching himself up. "No, I am old. The old things pass. I would not do. New times, new men, new minds.

"Now, if you please, will you tell me who's making the speeches," he said laughingly. "Be off to your bed. I see you're dying to be gone."

"Dean," said Father Huetter, as he gathered up a hat, a magazine, and an overcoat that belonged to him, and prepared to go, "the next time I set out to lecture you on any subject, I'll be careful to pick one that I know something about. Apparently, you had this one all thought out before I was born."

"'Tis a big pattern, Father," said the Dean quickly. "You see one part, I see another. No man can see more than a little of the mighty design as it works out of the loom of God."

Father Huetter said a thoughtful good-night and went slowly up the stairs.

The Dean rose and walked heavily across the room to the window. Pulling aside the curtain, he stood looking out into the night.

Down to the right, at intervals of a minute or so, the pall of the night was hurled back regularly by a great flare of light from one of John Sargent's furnaces. For a long time the Dean stood there fascinated, watching the great paws of fire that shot out spitefully from the beast of fire and iron that was John Sargent's mill. But it was not the sardonic beauty of the scene that

held the old priest. He was watching flash after flash as it leaped from out the belly of the furnace. He counted them aimlessly, but with an undercurrent of sickening thought running beneath his mind. He had heard some one say that every so many flashes of that light—he could not now remember the number—meant a man's life. Just about so many times that vicious paw of the beast struck out harmlessly. Then, it caught its prey, devoured him, and went on with its count for the next. From the outside there would be nothing to tell what flash had been the fatal one.

The Dean caught himself wondering if the count were nearly full. Whether this flash or the next one would mean a feast for the man-eating thing whose brain was John Sargent.

"Fuel of the fire," he repeated, recalling Father Huetter's expression. "It is the very thing that Isaias saw and pictured."

Shuddering, he turned away from the sight of the mill and looked up over the line of the hills to the cold, calm stars above. The great northern constellations, cut clean and sharp in the frosty air, stood ranked about the pole-star like bolt-heads of white steel in the roof of heaven.

As his eye roamed from star to star, he was struck—as though he had never before thought of it—by the vastness of God's universe. Thousands, nay millions of suns out there in the unlimned spaces, all feeding light and life to millions upon millions of unseen, unreckoned worlds!

Then he remembered that he was looking at only a patch of the sky. The cold, dispassionate immensity of it all fell upon him and seemed to crush him to the littleness of nothing.

"Dear God!" he breathed out his simple, boy-like wonder and adoration, "Dear God, what a parish You have! Is it not an impertinence to ask You to think of this pin-point in it?"

The telephone rang out a hurried, frightened call. There was a human, frantic note in the ring that ran through the house like a shriek. The Dean dropped the curtain and hastened out into the hall.

Down in the great die-room of his plant John Sargent was putting on pressure. Watch in hand, he stood in the center of the room driving the four great trip-hammers beyond all limits of safety and endurance—the endurance of even chilled steel.

He was the incarnate, implacable spirit of energy gone mad. Rush! was the one word upon his lips. Speed! was the one idea that went searing through his brain. To push those hydraulic hammers to the very last ounce of their ten-ton strokes; to give them no rest, no respite; to be ever at them, goading them, harrying them up to the limit, and over the limit of their power; this had become an obsession with John Sargent.

Now, a hydraulic hammer is the most sullen machine that a man ever attempts to drive. It

has no sympathy with useful work. It will not spring to its work with that readiness and goodwill that seems to make so many engines almost human to the touch. It seems to know that the primary business of its mighty blows is a business of destruction. Privately it seems to resent doing any work but that of destruction. But a canny man, who is beyond fear and nervousness, and who has a hand of steel, can make a hammer do marvels. A nervous, frightened man, a man who has lost the touch, cannot make the hammer hit the block true once in twenty strokes. The right man can make it punch a perfect eye in the smallest needle, not once but a thousand times in succession.

The four hammers that John Sargent timed were in a vile temper. Any man with an ear to hear what a machine means could have sensed the sullen roar of the hydraulic as it pulled away from the block, tearing at its own vitals in the roof of the room. And every down stroke had the thud of a vicious, murderous kick.

But John Sargent was not listening to the humor of machines. He had eight machines under his eye. Four of them were costly, beautiful wonders of their kind, things of steel and electric current and the laws of water under pressure. There need be no limit to the work of these four machines, if only he could get the other four machines to go with them.

The other four machines were things of bones

and blood and a little flesh, and their motive power was vaguely called a soul. They were not wonders. They were common things, and they were not lovely. Neither were they costly.

The latter four machines said that the former four machines could not be driven beyond fifty strokes to the minute.

"You lie and you shirk," said John Sargent. "The hydraulics will go as fast as your clumsy hands will feed and clear them."

Their hands were not clumsy. They were clever and deft and true: otherwise, they would not have remained on the arms to which they belonged.

But the machines did not answer. They knew that thirty-five strokes to the minute was fair work. At that rate a man had about a second and a half in which to yank a stamped piece of metal out from under the die as it rose and jam in another piece for it to fall upon. And the metal must be placed on the block with hair-breadth precision.

The men had been speeded up to fifty strokes without a murmur, while their counterparts, the other four machines, roared and groaned and fought above them.

Beyond that the men said the speed could not go. They did not say that *they* could not do it. They said it could not be done. For, though they were cheap, they knew that at their craft four better men than they did not live.

So John Sargent stood, watch in hand, to prove that they were liars. Slowly, cautiously, as John Sargent raised his hand, a man up in the roof of the room threw in switches to feed more current to the whining motors. That man up there believed that the extra pull would inevitably tear one of the hammers from its hold and send it crashing down, himself with it, to ruin. But he went on steadily applying the greater current. The men below the machines had not the slightest doubt that one of the four hammers would crack under the strain and come down to kill him or one of his three fellows. But they went on with their lightning-like cunning, snatching the cut metal from the die with the left hand and flicking the new piece into place with the right.

For five minutes the strokes went on up steadily, gaining one stroke to the minute; the human machines automatically tuning themselves up to the new speeds.

At fifty-five the gain was stopped, while the motors reeled and staggered trying to accustom themselves to the new load.

But John Sargent raised his hand higher, rose upon his toes as though to push the motors, and stamped his foot. And the motors staggered on, on up to where the speed was clearly above sixty!

He was a man maddened, possessed, with the feeling that by his very will he could drive things beyond their physical limits. And things, even

such things as hydraulic hammers, lent themselves to his madness.

Had those machines been anything but the sullen, unaccountable power-hammers that they were, one of them would have broken away somewhere. But no. Somehow, in the gloomy, vicious spirit that abides in all their kind, they seemed to take a decision. And they went on, striking beautifully and perfectly to the new time.

John Sargent dropped his hand, snapped his watch, and glowered around in triumph at the four cheap machines on the ground. He had set the pace for them, and his four costly, dependable machines would see that they kept it.

The men could not spare him a look or a thought. They could only speculate impersonally on the problem of how long it would be, at this speed, before one of them must lose his right hand—the left was never in danger.

Sargent hurried from that room and down through the next, where the gaunt white torsos of men stripped to the waist gleamed under the white of the electric glare above and blistered over the whiter glare of the running metal which they puddled in the molds.

Men everywhere looked furtively at him and shrank away instinctively. He could feel it. They were afraid of him. Not physically. There was nothing of that sort in their looks.

But Sargent did not stop to analyze them

or their feelings. He was on his way to the furnace-room. It was the biggest and most directly expensive of all the units of his mill. And into it, since that day when he had come to Milton to take back his mill from the control of the Governor and to fight his enemies, he had thrown the greatest part of his energy and driving-power. Here among the furnaces was the thumping heart of his great plant. And here, sleepless, baggy-eyed, furious, he had fought to clip a little off the time of every operation, to crowd a little more metal into every furnace.

And he had succeeded. There was no doubt of that. He had practically doubled the enormous normal output of his mill. He had cut corners everywhere. And money was pouring back to him: real, hard money that would put him where he could fight the world. A few weeks more of this and he would have knocked the market from under the International. He would deal that inflated and top-heavy combine a blow from which it would never recover. Then he could turn and deal with the other enemies whom he had marked.

But he was not yet satisfied with that furnace-room. It had done much, but it could do more. The momentum of his driving frenzy of the past weeks would not let him stop. He refused to know when he had come to the last possible measure of work and power in that room.

The furnace-room is at once the heart, the

stomach, and the nerve center of every iron milling plant. The whole plant is driven, nourished, and controlled from here. Here the tension upon every man, however unimportant his work may seem, is heart-breaking. Speed is the dominating factor in every operation, while the loss or the saving of thousands of dollars' worth of material may turn upon a judgment that must be arrived at, given, and acted upon all in the winking of an eye.

Sargent stamping into the room seemed to send a galvanic spark into every man and thing in it. Men who were sulky, and who always worked more deliberately when they found other bosses eyeing them, found themselves jumping to their work when Sargent came near. Afterward they cursed themselves for what they thought was their servility. They were wrong. John Sargent had always had a dynamic power over men and machines. He had always been able to get more out of them than any other man could. And in these weeks, when the whole overweening force of his will had been set to drive them, his power over things, animate and inanimate, that worked for him had become almost uncanny.

He climbed a ladder and began walking the runways above the furnaces. From here he could dominate and throw his will behind every man and every operation in the room. Men leaped at their tasks without stopping to wonder why they did so. The giant cranes picked up

their loads and swung them around the room swiftly and surely. The great buckets with their tons of seething, bubbling metal came flaring up out of the furnaces, shooting their flare of light up into the open sky, and went hurrying out to the molders. Here was John Sargent in the heart of his kingdom. He gloated in the hot, panting, sulphurous breath of it all.

But it was not enough. Machines that worked so, could work more. Men who went at that gait could be driven a little faster.

Seven men with seven wheelbarrows made a chain to wheel slugs of raw iron to a furnace that had just been cleaned out. Officially these seven were not men. The Milton Machinery Company knew them solely by the numbers from F884 to F890. Colloquially they were seven "Hunks." Of all the things that worked for John Sargent these were the cheapest. It cost absolutely nothing to replace one, or a dozen, of them.

They wheeled their loads straight across the room at a height of thirty feet from the floor on a narrow iron bridge that had no guard or rail of any kind. They went back with the empty barrow by another and longer route.

About midway under their bridge, but a little to the left of it, stood the largest furnace in the room. Six times in twenty-four hours the great open bucket came up out of the furnace, carrying eight tons of stewing, sputtering iron. It

swung up past the bridge, clearing it only by inches, on up nearly to the roof. There the "traveler" caught it and rushed it out to the other room.

The seven did not appear to have caught the spark that John Sargent's will threw into the room. They worked well, but stolidly, woodenly, a way that did not please him. Scowling, he crossed over and stood above the empty furnace where the seven came with their loads.

The change was instant. The seven shook themselves out of their woodenness and came charging across with their barrows as though he yanked them on a wire. That was right. That was the way he wanted to see things work. F386, a tow-haired, undergrown boy, fresh from the Carpathian Mountains, ran on to the little bridge pushing four hundred pounds of iron ahead of him. Perhaps F386 did not notice that the bucket swung up out of the furnace beneath just as he came upon the bridge. Perhaps he did notice it, but thought he could cross before it came up dangerously near the bridge. It is not important. Could he have crossed safely if John Sargent had not yelled? It is possible. But it is not important. John Sargent yelled: "Come on, Hunk!"

F386 did not know what John Sargent said. He stopped, or tried to. The loaded barrow dragged him along. He could not think to let go of it. The wheel of the barrow ran off the

bridge. The barrow toppled over and fell, to the right. In falling, it turned and one of its handles kicked F886 in the chest.

F886 toppled and fell off the bridge—to the *left*. The bucket was directly underneath on that side.

The barrow clanged down on the floor. The bucket, sputtering and fuming, went on up. Some man stopped the electric winder that was raising the bucket. The bucket hung quiet in mid-air. John Sargent stood quiet, rubbing the line of his lips with his finger. One man ran to a telephone. Every other man in the room stood in whatever attitude he had been in at the moment the thing happened. A full minute passed —nearly two minutes, a long, hard-breathing time. No man moved.

Suddenly John Sargent dashed his hand down from his lips, shook himself loose from the thing that had held him, and shouted:

"Who stopped that winder? Run that bucket out to the molds."

You see, John Sargent was not really sane at this time.

No man moved to obey. The chain that had been wheeling iron stood in its tracks where the broken link had left it. Men down on the floor of the room looked at the barrow where it lay, looked up at John Sargent, looked up at what swung in the air.

Again and again Sargent bellowed his com-

mand down to the men near the winder to start it. He called them by name to do it and when they stood motionless he shouted down that they were then and there discharged.

Then he ran down the ladder and started for the hoister, to set it in motion himself. But they would not let him. They crowded around and kept him away from it. Finally two strong men sat him down upon a bench and held him there, impotent, and speechless with rage.

Five—ten minutes passed. What were the men waiting for? Leadership. They did not know what should be done.

In the end, old Peter Choyniski solved the matter. He stepped to the hoister and slowly let the bucket down till it ran upon a second "traveler" that went out through the end of the room and out over the river. Then he stopped and waited.

Dean Driscoll came striding into the room. Jim Heffernan met him near the door.

"It was no use calling you," Heffernan explained. "But I didn't right know what I was doing, Father. A Hunk fell into the bucket," he went on, looking up, "and he—you see—*there's nothing left.*"

Old Peter Choyniski went on with his business. He set the "traveler" into a slow motion. By a common impulse every man in the room followed down to the end of the room, where the great doors swung open upon the bulkhead and the

broad, quiet pond of the river above the dam.

Every man except one: John Sargent sat where they had left him, forgotten.

He saw the crowd of men out upon the bulkhead. He saw the bucket move out to the end of the "traveler" frame, well over the water. He saw the bucket lowered, saw its mighty jaws unlocked, saw its load slip down to the water. A great pillar of steam shot up from the icy water. He saw Father Driscoll kneel on the stones of the bulkhead, saw all but a few of the men doing the same. He got up, shivering, rubbing his lips; and went up to his office.

CHAPTER XII

THE PRISONER OF HIS SOUL

IN the trial-room of the court house of Mohawk County a farce was being acted out.

High up on the west wall of the room, on a broad panel of black walnut, the Scales of Justice, "that are tipped by a hair," hung graven to a gigantic measure. All men might see that the business of this room was the business of Justice herself. On the bench under the panel sat Ichabod Whitcomb, a judge reverend of mien, unswerving of eye, inexorable as the falling sword in judgment. On the tall walnut rampart that ran nearly the whole width of the room in front of the judge there was carved a great open book, a symbol that here in this place the doings of men were to be truly read. At the right, in two rows of stalls, one raised above and behind the other, sat twelve men, citizens, peers of the realm, each man a sworn judge. At the side of their enclosure stood an officer of the law's own majesty, sworn to guard these twelve from any and every outside influence.

The farce was that all of this impressive machinery, from the graven scales on the wall down

to the stupid image of the law who stood at the door of the jury-box, was set for the one purpose of proving guilty a man who was not guilty, whom nobody thought guilty.

The farce was a tragedy, too. But the tragedy was not so much that Jim Loyd, who sat in a raised, railed box at the left of the room, might and probably would be convicted of a crime which he had not committed. The tragedy was one darker than that. Half a thousand years ago men fought for trial by jury. They achieved it. It became a fact, a sacred institution. The security, the life, and liberty of two hundred millions of civilized white men rest upon it to-day. Trial by jury in the beginning was a crude safeguard for the weak individual against the law in the hands of a powerful enemy. It was argued that the powerful enemy could not coerce or persuade twelve free men to condemn unjustly one of their neighbors. Or at least, men agreed, it would not be easy to so coerce or corrupt twelve free men. That was as much as one could say positively for the system, that it would not be easy to make it serve the will of a powerful bad man.

That is all that men can say of the system to-day. It is not easy to place twelve corrupt or corruptible men on a jury together. After civilization has worked five centuries upon the jury system, the bulwark of a man's life and liberty, we can go no farther than to say that the in-

dividual is usually protected by it. We know that the very precautions and guards that we have put about the system can be and are sometimes used to work for the condemnation of innocent men.

Here was the tragedy running under the farce of the trial of Jim Loyd for conspiring to blow up John Sargent's mill. It was not Jim Loyd that was on trial. The jury system was on trial. The community which supported that system was on trial. The State was on trial. So, on the one hand, the "State" was trying Jim Loyd. And, on the other hand, Jim Loyd was trying the State.

The "State" was moving rapidly to find Jim Loyd guilty. Jim Loyd had already decided that the State was guilty. He would wait, however. He had promised to wait. He would give the State every opportunity to clear itself. He would wait for the farce to be played out.

He was a man just turned thirty, but his corrugated, sharp-cut face might have belonged to a man of fifty. It was a face of iron and white steel and smoldering furnace fires. Because, for eighteen years these things had been his playthings and his tools.

He was paying but little attention to this farce of trial of which he was the central figure. He understood the marshaling of the forces against him. He foresaw every move of the prosecution and knew its effect. He had not been surprised

at any of it. His knowledge of the politics and greed and coercion by which John Sargent's money dominated Mohawk County had prepared him for it.

In his mind it was a foregone conclusion that the "State," in the person of a servile prosecuting attorney, a venal judge, and twelve studiously selected jurymen, should convict him of this particular thing.

But there was a larger question than that. The State, in the larger sense, had always condemned him. That was the important thing. The State had condemned him, a boy of twelve, to go into John Sargent's mill and catch red-hot bolts in a bucket for forty cents a day. It was just about that time that he had decided to become a famous baseball catcher. The State had made different arrangements for him, had given him a heavy bucket instead of a catcher's mitt, and had made balls out of rod steel for him to catch.

But it was a game, too, in that day. He never minded it. He pitted his eye and his hand against the speed and bad aim of the men as they threw the bolts to him. The only difference was that an "error," in this game, meant a badly burned leg or arm.

How proud he was that night when he straightened his aching back and strutted home to his mother, carrying his first week's pay—minus twenty cents, fines for bolts dropped! He re-

membered now, with a choke in his throat, how his mother slyly laughed and cried at him that night as he marched about the house, thumbs under his suspenders, patronizing the other children—Jane and baby Harry that was killed—and lecturing her on how to get the most for the money.

It was a game, and because he grew fast and was bigger and quicker and stronger than others, he played it better. He played it so well that at fifteen he was drawing the pay of a good man. At twenty he was running a section of the casting room with forty men under him. At twenty-five—John Sargent believed in young men and the scrap-heap was always near—Loyd was given charge of the furnace room and the casting room together.

His pay was thirty dollars a week. During the first year that he had charge of those rooms he increased the net apportioned earnings of those two rooms by eighteen thousand dollars.

He increased those earnings. There were no changes in machinery during that year. There were no additional overhead expenses. There was no increase of capital invested in those two rooms. By his skill, judgment, and personal force Jim Loyd that year *earned* eighteen thousand dollars for the Milton Machinery Company. The Milton Machinery Company acknowledged it—they gave him two dollars a week more pay

for the next year. If during the next year he increased the earnings of those two rooms an additional eighteen thousand dollars, they would probably give him another two dollars increase in pay.

That increase was impossible, of course. By gigantic efforts he had during that one year set a record for himself which he could never better. The rest of his life—or so long as the company allowed him to keep his position—would be spent in a heart-breaking, tooth-and-nail fight to keep up to the record which in the foolish and wasteful pride of youth he had set for himself. It would not be long before some young college-turned superintendent, himself with a record to make, would be looking for a man who could do more than Jim Loyd.

So, coming into his twenty-seventh year, Jim Loyd saw that something was wrong. He had played the game at which the State had set him. He had played the game honestly, faithfully, and *better* than any other man he knew of. And this was the result. He saw other men, men of his own age, men who had none of his ability or power, drawing their three hundred dollars a month, or more. And that was not all. Those men, at from twenty-five to thirty-five, were just beginning their careers. They had twenty, maybe thirty, years ahead of them in which every good piece of work they did, every record they

made would count for them, would bring them on up to more money, to a surer place in their business.

Jim Loyd's career was done. He had reached a dead-line. He knew it. He had come swiftly up to the line beyond which a man who begins work with his hands and without technical training and education cannot go. He had no quarrel with those other men, chemists, engineers, experts, executives, who, though older than he, had still years ahead of them in which to advance.

The State, Society—whatever you called the organization of things as they are—had given them education and a start which it had not given to him. He had no quarrel with that. Those men actually earned the money that the company gave them. They were worth it, or they would not be getting it.

But the State, Society, Things as They Are, had set him at a certain game. He had been told to work honestly and faithfully, and to push on as rapidly as possible. He had done all that. But the State failed to see to it that he should get what he won in the game. The State stood by and supported John Sargent in the position that John Sargent should get about seventeen dollars out of every eighteen that Jim Loyd earned.

He had no quarrel even with John Sargent. John Sargent found Things as They Are, and he used them, that was all. John Sargent found a state of things in which he could make men earn

for him two, five, ten, or even fifteen times what he was obliged to pay them. It would be foolish to blame John Sargent for using things as he found them.

Jim Loyd's mind went cleanly through the problem and he saw that his quarrel was directly with the conditions of things, with the ways in which men were organized into the commonwealth, with the State, in fact.

It was not that his father had died in the Sargent mill, leaving the mother and three children unprovided for. It was not that John Sargent was a bad man and a legalized extortioner. It was the whole organization and constitution of things that worked the injustice.

It was not in Jim Loyd's aggressive nature to stand looking dumbly at this dead wall against which he had come. Immediately he began looking for the way through. It was natural that he should hear and study the arguments of Socialism. It was in the air. He listened avidly to the vaporings of men who had had a better surface education than he, but who lacked his bold, clear sight. He found them shallow and unready. They gave smart half-answers that did not answer anything. He shook them all off and got books, dozens of books, bushels of books. He read them all, impatiently, greedily, without direction and without sequence. Some were merely hysterical rant. Some were able to see what was wrong with the constitution of things,

but as soon as they began to deal in remedies they became vague and rambled into futile, childish generalities. Their remedies ran all the way from the courts and the ballot-box to slow and ignoble death for every man who owned property.

One book held him so that he battled with it for months at a time. He came to hate the book; but he went back at it again and again. That book began with the plain statement that the idea of an omnipotent God creating and ruling the world was the greatest existing obstacle to the progress of democracy. It went on to prove that the whole existing industrial system whereby one man was able to exploit the work of another man could be traced directly back to the idea of the authority of God. That idea of God and the authority of God must be stamped out of men's minds before there could be any real change in things, because men held the power and the wealth of the world on the theory that power was God-given, that wealth was in some way a dispensation of God.

It was a powerful and a clever book, and Jim Loyd fought with it page by page. Somewhere in it, his native wit told him, there was concealed a clever, damnable lie of logic. But he could not find the lie.

However, his mind drove on through the windy fog of words and books until it came out on the other side and he found himself just where he

had started. He was still facing the fact that the State upheld John Sargent in taking away from him the greater part of his earnings.

He went into the Socialist party in politics, not because he thought that that party would ever win or would ever accomplish anything lasting if it did win, but because it was a means of advertising certain good measures which, if they were well advertised, would finally be taken up by one of the great parties. So far as he could see, that would be the only thing that Socialism would ever accomplish in the politics of the country. It could advertise and create a demand for certain reforms. One or another of the great parties would then see good politics in them and would take up those reforms and accomplish them.

Temperamentally he hated the arm-swinging demagoguery of Socialism. He was a self-contained, almost a sullen man. By instinct he distrusted men who talked and wrote fluently. He had all of a silent man's aversion against baring freely to the world the things that he felt deeply. He had a feeling that if these Socialists really believed and expected to back up the things they said, they would not be so ready of speech.

Then came this strike. He had opposed it from the moment he saw it coming. It was coming at the wrong time. The cause of the strike was not a good, clear-cut issue that would appeal to the imagination of the country. The Milton

Machinery Company had an enormous stock on hand, and the market was falling. He had weighed all these things and had fought desperately to keep the men at work. Once declared, however, he had thrown himself into it and had used all the power of mind and body that he possessed, and even sometimes the weight of his two big fists, to hold the men together, to keep them orderly and to feed them.

Everywhere men gave way to him. The heads of the different local unions gradually shifted their responsibilities to his shoulders. In the end he found himself in sole and absolute control of the whole strike. He found more than that. He found weaker men beginning to lean upon him. He came to cringe from the patient, appealing looks of women, especially the mute foreign women, when they came to him looking for the food that he did not have for them. His soul quivered when he caught eyes, hungry and big, of little children looking up at him. They had been told that food came from Jim Loyd; and they looked up at him as though at some god who might any moment, if he were so pleased, throw down food to them.

The strike came to be *his* strike. It took on a personal, bitter, desperate nature, such as he had never thought a strike could possess.

Then John Sargent came to Milton to take personal charge of his side of the strike.

Now the issue was fairly set. Jim Loyd was

a fighting man naturally. And like every fighting man, he was better suited to have a personal enemy to fight against. But he was not now fighting John Sargent for the difference between the money that he earned and the money that John Sargent gave him. He was fighting the fight of weaker men, the fight of starving women, the fight of puny, dying children.

John Sargent struck first. He could not know how deeply he struck that night when he had offered Loyd fifty thousand dollars to settle the strike; and Loyd had been tempted—no, not tempted, but blinded momentarily—by the flash of money and the possibilities for life that the money revealed.

John Sargent struck again. Harry Loyd—baby Harry—was killed in front of John Sargent's gate.

John Sargent struck again. Jim Loyd was taken away from the coffin of his brother. He was marched to the county jail. He had been there now nearly four months, awaiting trial for a thing which he could not have done.

John Sargent was striking again. Jim Loyd had been indicted by a grand jury controlled by John Sargent on the charge of inciting and conspiring to blow up the plant of the Milton Machinery Company. He was now being given a trial by jury. The judge who sat under the Scales of Justice was a well-paid employee of John Sargent. He received three thousand dol-

lars a year from Mohawk County for his work as judge. He received ten thousand dollars a year from John Sargent, as a retainer—and he was worth every cent of it.

No man who had ever had any connexion with or sympathy for organized labor was allowed upon that jury. Three of the jurymen were secretly small stockholders of the Milton Machinery Company. Six of them were farmers whose farms were heavily mortgaged to one or the other of the Milton banks—controlled by John Sargent. The remaining three were weak, negligible men who could easily be browbeaten into voting with the majority.

Thus John Sargent was striking a final blow. And Jim Loyd had not struck back. Why? John Sargent had struck cruelly, foully, at his manhood, at his brother, at his life and liberty. Why had Jim Loyd not struck back? He was a fighting man. Why had he thus held his neck to the blows? For years his mind had been steeping itself in the outpourings of Socialism and the kindred bloodthirsty doctrines that follow it. They had taught him nothing that he had not known before. They had shown him no way to deal with his situation or with the state of things that made that situation possible, and inevitable. But, at the bottom of them all, when he had floundered his way through their shallow, schoolboyish theories and schemes, he found always one concrete conviction. Tacitly or openly,

they all agreed that the existing things could not be changed without force. Force meant killing. It meant the rising of the many in a sweeping upheaval of blood and destruction to wipe out the few.

Although he had not easily agreed to this, it had appealed strongly to him. He knew it was the truth. He knew that at least it was the truth for the present. There was no other immediate way.

Socialism had been able to convince him of only one thing: that was that the Law, the State, the thing that holds men where they are, is simply the will of the strong. That was government, that was law, that was society. This was the bedrock of Socialism. It was a thing that he could understand and plant his feet upon.

And who was stronger than he? Where was there a man who could command four thousand strong men as he could command the men of Milton? Who in this country were the strong if they were not the millions of men who toiled with their hands?

Why had he not struck? Why had he stood, like a cow in the stanchions, in John Sargent's little jail? A word from himself would have freed him.

All was a farce. The jail was a farce. The Governor, marching his troops to Milton, and marching them away again on John Sargent's word, he was a farce.

The will of the strong was the only real thing. Jim Loyd had the will, and he was strong. Why had he not struck?

He knew. On that night, so long ago now, when John Sargent had struck at his manhood and his truth to his fellows, he had wanted to kill John Sargent with his hands, his bare hands, so that he might feel the man's life beat out between them. God held his hands. Later, that same night, with the rage of destruction upon him, he had taken from its hiding-place enough dynamite to wreck the entire mill. He had expected to die in the ruins. And he had looked across the valley to the church of his Faith upon the hill. And he had seen Christ—so that his hand was stayed. On another night, the night after Harry Loyd was killed, he had been ready to walk out of his jail, head his four thousand, kill John Sargent's guards, and take into his own hands everything that men said belonged to John Sargent. He could have done it, following the will of the strong. But an old man with Christ in his heart had stopped him.

Sometimes, tramping and champing in the cage where the will of the strong had put him, he had railed at himself for a loose-lipped threatener, a mouthing Socialist like the fluent ones he despised, without the heart to do the things that he willed. But he was wrong in this. He did not lack the courage. The element of fear had been left out of his composition. He was a man

strong to the roots. Things took a mighty hold upon Jim Loyd. His passions ran in deep and terrible riots. That one final lesson of Socialism, that the will of the strong is the only law of men, had taken a mighty hold upon his imagination. But, deeper than passion, deeper than blood riot and the lust to kill, deeper than imagination, there were still depths in Jim Loyd.

In those unplumbed depths of Jim Loyd's soul there lived God and the Faith of Christ. Out of those ultimate depths, at the crucial moment, came the Prisoner of His Soul, Christ's Grace, to hold his raised arm. He did not know it; but his faith, the Catholic faith of his heart, of his blood, of his mother, was the last, the ruling force of his nature. It was stronger than the riot of unruly passions in his blood. It was stronger than the hold that any teaching could take upon his imagination. It was stronger than Socialism. It was stronger than he.

So Jim Loyd sat listening to testimony that would make of him a felon, a pariah, an outcast of men. The big trial-room was packed to the doors with eager, scowling men. They were men who had worked all of the night before and who had snatched a little breakfast and an hour of sleep before the court opened. Heavy with sleep, their eyes still black with the grime of the night's work, they sat or stood doggedly watching and listening. They could not believe the thing that was going on here before them. But

the conviction had settled upon them that it *was* going on to the end. They knew that Loyd was not guilty. They knew that Roger Winters, the prosecuting attorney, knew that he was not guilty. They knew that Ichabod Whitcomb on the bench was aware of Loyd's innocence. They knew that there was not a juror on that bench who would in his heart be convinced that Loyd was guilty.

Yet they saw the unbelievable thing going on before their eyes, just as John Sargent had willed that it should go on. What they saw was the failure of civilization. It was one of the proofs that men have not yet found the way to protect themselves against the power of the strong. That they had never before seen anything so patent or so flagrant, merely proved that it was not easy. The tragedy remained, that, after ages of struggle for personal security, it was still possible.

The men, however, were not concerned with the battle of civilization. They were wondering how long Loyd would go on with the thing. A word from him would have brought four thousand men to tear down the very Scales of Justice from that room. Would he give the word?

Roger Winters was examining one of the principal witnesses for the "State." This witness, Victor Sorrel, was one of a gang of professional dynamiters who had come to Milton early in the course of the strike to offer their services to the

strikers. Loyd had taken the explosives from them and had driven them from the town.

"When did you first come to Milton?" asked the attorney.

"Last July."

"Why did you come here?"

"To bring dynamite to help the strike."

"Did you use the dynamite?"

"No. Jim Loyd took it from me."

"Explain."

"He had an office in State Street. He handled the strike there. I went there one night with the stuff. I carried it in a mason's tool-bag. I told him what I had and what I could do with it."

"What did Loyd say?"

"He said, 'Put it in there.' He showed me a closet in the office. I put it in there on the floor."

"What then?"

"The closet door had a spring lock. I snapped it shut. I just heard the snap as Loyd took me by the throat, from behind. He has big hands made of iron. He made no noise; neither did I. It was late at night. He carried me under one arm and held my throat with his hand. He took me out through the alley at the back and down through other alleys to the main tracks of the U. & B. I kicked and fought, but I could not get away or yell. He stood on the east-bound track holding me, waiting for a freight that was coming up on the west-bound track."

"Go on."

"He was going to throw me under the wheels as the train ran by, but he changed his mind. A string of empty coal cars came by. He loosed my throat and took me in his hands, around the body, and threw me, like a bag, into a car. I was in Buffalo next morning with my neck nearly broken."

A hum of comment ran round the room. The men had not heard this story before. They had seen this man in town at that time. Many of them had known what his business was. But none of them had known how he went. The witness was probably telling the exact truth. It was just one of the things that Loyd would do.

When the court became quiet again the prosecutor continued:

"Why should Loyd wish to get you out of the town, while keeping the dynamite here?"

"He wanted to do everything himself. It was not a Union strike. It was his own strike. He wanted to be the big man of it. He did not want any one to get credit for anything."

Winters turned the witness over to Stanley Morgan, counsel for Loyd.

"Were you ever convicted of any crime?" asked Morgan.

"I object, Your Honor," said Winters quickly. "The witness is not on trial."

"Sustained," growled the judge.

"I take exception to the ruling," said Morgan

in a monotonous and weary voice. It was the single melancholy privilege accorded to him in that court. The same play had gone on now for two days. Practically every question that he had attempted to put to any of the "State's" witnesses had been objected to and ruled out. He had not been allowed to draw out the glaring inconsistencies of their stories. He had not been given a chance to question the record or the credibility of any witness. The prosecution had been allowed to put statements, guesses, and opinions upon the record as sworn evidence, and he had been reduced to the mere formula of taking exception after exception.

Long ago he had told Loyd that it was foolish to look for any semblance of a fair trial in Mohawk County, and that he should appeal for a change of venue. But Loyd had stubbornly insisted that Mohawk County was his home, and that he would try justice here just as much as justice would try him. The lawyer did not know what Loyd meant.

"Do you know John Sargent?" Morgan tried again.

"I object," repeated Winters. "Mr. Sargent is not relevant to this case."

It was barefaced. In view of facts and law, it was almost indecent. But the judge nodded his assent and the objection stood.

Morgan threw up his hands in disgust, and let the witness go. The judge warned the lawyer

against a show of contempt for the ruling of the court.

The next witness was Tony Michelis, a cross-grained little hunchback who had once been discharged by Loyd and who had ever since held a cripple's unreasoning hate for him. In the stormy days of the strike he had spied upon Loyd's every action. He had carried reports nightly to the mill. He had been as tireless as Loyd himself, and in the eighteen and twenty hours of each day in which Loyd was awake and working he had scarcely let him out of sight. The men had told Loyd that Tony was tracking him, but, characteristically, he had brushed the little hunchback out of his mind.

"That last witness," said Winters, when Tony had been sworn, "did you ever see him before?"

"Yah. I seen that fallah."

"Where and when did you see him?"

"Thas the night he tole you 'bout. I seen him. Big Jim Loyd he got him on the neck."

"Where were you?"

"Me? I outsides stands on the sidewalk und looks in."

"Did you see a bag?"

"Yah. I seen her. White bag. That fallah fetch her."

"What was done with the bag?"

"That fallah he shove her inside on closet door."

"What happened then?"

"Big Jim Loyd he do carry that fallah out back doors."

"What did you do?"

"Me? I wait. Ten minute come back Big Jim Loyd. He take out that bag outside. Put her in the middle on floor. Take out them things inside."

"What things?"

"Thas dy'mite. Seben stick."

"Do you know dynamite when you see it?"

"Yah. I know her. Work on quarry with her."

"What else was in the bag?"

"Got nitro, too. Six tube."

"What else?"

"Got one clock. One spool wire. One box caps."

"What did Loyd do then?"

"He put that back inside bag, soft. Then he put out that light und come outside und start down the street."

"Did he see you?"

"Me? No, I stand in the wall darkside."

"Did he have the bag?"

"Yah. He got that bag. He come down street. Turn, then he come upstreet by mill. Come on river. I come too. Got boat there. Big Jim Loyd cross river. I stand on bank-side. He go on hill otherside. Got tree up there. He stay. Bimebye come back. Got bag empty. Throw bag on river. Go home."

Morgan felt that there was nothing to be gained by attempting to cross-examine the hunchback. He had told the truth, as Morgan knew it and as perhaps a hundred other people knew it. Loyd had buried the explosives up there on the hill across the river.

There was a stir near the east door of the room, and Loyd turned in his seat to see. Father Driscoll had just come in. Men were making place for him.

The Dean had not been present at the trial on any of the preceding days, and Loyd wondered dully why he had come now. There was nothing that he could do. Though he knew that the old priest loved him and understood him, he found himself nervously wishing that Father Driscoll would keep away from the court. He could not tell what might happen. His will was set upon a certain course; he did not know when the moment for action might come, and he had come to feel that the appearance of his friend was always disconcerting.

The business of the trial went on.

The next witness was a private detective in the employ of John Sargent.

He fixed the night when Jim Loyd had gone to the mill to see Sargent. He told how he had seen Loyd rush out of Mr. Sargent's private office and how he had followed him almost at a run up over the hills and on a long tramp through

the country until he had finally doubled back to the river.

Questioned professionally, he explained at considerable length that Loyd's actions at the time were those that would be expected of a man who felt that he was being watched. A man wanting to go to a certain place and feeling that it was dangerous to go there openly, would very likely run off in an opposite direction and take his time doubling back to the point of his objective. Loyd's actions were those of a man intending to commit a crime.

In spite of Morgan's objections, the man's argument was allowed to go into the record as expert testimony. Even Ichabod Whitcomb saw a sort of grisly humor in the ruling as he gave it.

The man had followed Loyd across the river in another boat. Had crept up the hill after him and had seen him dig at the roots of a tree. Loyd had picked out the sticks and tubes and the firing mechanism and wire. The latter was the very thing, the detective swore, that had been used in the explosion of the mill. Loyd had stowed the things about his person. Had stood a while looking down at the mill and then started slowly down the hill. The detective had been obliged to let Loyd get a considerable distance ahead of him in crossing the river, but had easily caught up with him when both

were once on the Milton side. He had followed him up through a side street of the village and had come upon him seated on the steps of the Catholic church. He was then talking with the priest.

Loyd dug his nails into the wood of the railing about him as he recalled the agony of that night.

The detective was excused. The prosecutor wrote something on a slip of paper and handed it to the clerk, who read out the name of the next witness:

"The Reverend James Driscoll."

CHAPTER XIII

THE WILL OF THE STRONG

THE Dean of Milton walked quietly up the aisle of the crowded courtroom and took his place in the witness stand. A profound hush of bewilderment and expectancy fell over the crowd of anxious, weary men who jammed the room. It had not occurred to any one in Milton that Father Driscoll might be called as a witness in the prosecution of Jim Loyd's trial. The attorney for the prosecution had served the subpœna in person, so that only he and the priest knew that the latter was to appear.

If he had come as a character witness for the defense, or if he had come to clear up some point in Jim Loyd's actions, it could have been understood. But that the prosecution should bring him here and attempt to use him was unbelievable.

Loyd that morning had requested to be secured to one of the jail guards. Fred Wheeler, the warden of the jail, who was responsible for his keeping, was a good man and his friend. He did not understand the reason for Loyd's request. But he did what was asked. He locked Loyd's left arm to the right arm of a stout keeper

by a steel chain. On a raised stool beside the prisoner's box the keeper sat leaning on the rail.

As Father Driscoll stepped into the witness stand, Loyd started to rise, but the chain, which he had forgotten, tugged sharply at his wrist—by way of reminder. He looked into the calm, clear-eyed face of the old priest, and remembered that he had promised to see this thing through to the very end.

He remembered Sargent's threat that he would find a way to drive Father Driscoll from Milton, but, on sober thought, he had dismissed it as angry bluster. Now he did not know what to think. He would wait.

The Dean himself was as much puzzled as any one in the room by the action of the prosecution in calling him. Since yesterday, when he had received the subpœna, he had been beating his brain to understand the significance of the move. At first he had thought that it was only a part of Sargent's general tactics, a ruse, designed to give the impression that the priest was willing to assist in the prosecution of a Union man—that the Church generally was against Labor. But he knew that John Sargent was not just now wasting his time creating public opinion. He must have some definite and immediate motive in it. Slowly and reluctantly Father Driscoll had come to the conviction that the move meant some kind of a trap for himself.

Attorney Winters, with a show of courtesy,

waived the form of the oath and proceeded directly to his questions.

"Do you remember, sir," he began, "the night of the twenty-ninth of August last?"

"I do."

"You talked with the prisoner on that night?"

"I did."

"Where was this?"

"On the steps of my church."

"What was the substance of the conversation?"

"Nothing that could in any way relate to this action."

The prosecuting attorney was somewhat taken back. He had not anticipated difficulty so soon.

"In view of the fact," he said, after a little pause, "that the prisoner, right up to the moment that he came to speak to you, was engaged in an act that led directly to the crime charged in this action, your answer seems hardly probable."

"If you were not prepared to accept my word," the Dean replied stiffly, "you should have exacted the formal oath."

"No, no, sir; nothing of the kind!" exclaimed the attorney blandly. "It really does not matter whether you answer that question or not."

He did not wish to put the priest under oath. He was acting under instructions. And, so far as those instructions went, or even so far as the conviction of Loyd was concerned, he said truly that it did not matter whether Father Driscoll answered that particular question or not.

"I take it," he began again, "that on that occasion you gave the prisoner advice?"

"I did."

"You are his spiritual adviser?"

"I am the parish priest of Milton."

"Your people habitually come to you for advice? They do as you advise them?"

"Sometimes," said the Dean drily.

"Well, then, the point I am trying to make is this," the attorney went on, taking the Dean into his confidence; "we have proved that this prisoner was on his way to commit a crime when he saw you. We have proved that he had with him the means of committing that crime while he talked with you. We—"

"You have proved nothing of the kind," said the Dean sharply.

But the attorney went swiftly on:

"We have shown that the defendant, intent upon a crime, came to you. You advised him. He changed his purpose. He did not commit the crime—at that time. We are bound to assume, then, that you were cognizant of his intent and that through your influence the crime was—postponed."

"Your assumptions have no place in a court of justice," said the Dean warmly. "I have told you that our conversation had no bearing whatever on this action."

He was still puzzled by the attorney's line of questions and presumptions.

"This prisoner is an avowed Socialist," said the attorney, leaping to an entirely new line of deductions. "Being a professed Socialist, he could not be a member of your Church, could he?"

" 'My Church,' " the Dean said evenly, "has to do with the moral law and the faith of Christ."

"You do not wish to answer?"

"I have answered."

"The question was perhaps too broad," the attorney went on, unheeding. "At any rate, the prisoner has not for some time been an active member of your congregation. Your friendship with him has been rather personal than—should I say—professional?"

"I do not understand your question or what bearing it has."

"You remember the night of the day on which the prisoner was arrested?" asked the attorney, jumping quickly to a new line.

"I remember."

"You were in the Mohawk County jail that night?"

"Yes, sir."

"You were aware that the prisoner had a plan formed to break out of the jail and to take possession by lawless force—by murder, if necessary—of the Milton Machinery Company's plant and of this town?"

"I learned of that after going to the jail."

"You took the keys of the jail from the Sheriff

of this County and offered the door of freedom to the prisoner?"

"That is partly true."

"You said to him, 'If you go out from this place, you take me with you; if you do this thing, I shall have the responsibility.' You said those things?"

"I used such words."

"Now, do you take such responsibility for every act of one of your parishioners? In other words, did you take such an attitude with this prisoner as the parish priest of Milton, or did you do so because there was an intimate personal relationship, friendship, and understanding between you and this prisoner?"

"What I did, I did as a priest of God, to avert bloodshed."

"The point is," said the attorney quickly, "that you were *able* to do it. It goes to prove that your influence over this prisoner was at all times paramount, all-powerful.

"Here he was," Winters declaimed, "on one occasion going directly to the commission of a crime which we are proving he did later commit. Advice from you turned him aside. Here he was on another occasion ready to walk triumphantly out of jail and start a miniature civil war. A few words from you turned him back. His whole course of action during this entire trouble has been largely guided by you. Witness the fact that in the very jail you prevented

him from a murderous attack upon Mr. Sargent!

"Can you expect any reasoning community to believe that you have not been part and parcel of his acts? Has he not come to you? Have you not stood at his elbow? Has not your will, your advice, dominated him at every turn?"

Loyd's counsel was on his feet protesting madly.

"Your Honor, this is an outrage! It is an infamous abuse of privilege! This witness is not here to be tried for—"

The judge rapped sharply and rebuked him.

"Mr. Morgan, you are to remember that this witness is here for the prosecution. It is not your part to protect him."

"My position," Winters continued to the Dean, "as District Attorney of this County, impels me to advise you that you have come dangerously near to what might look like com—"

"Sir, is that a threat?" The old priest towered up to the full of his great height, his strong white locks of hair flung back in indignation.

"Well, sir, let it be a threat, then. Let it stand as a threat, and I will match it. I will say that I *am* responsible for Jimmie Loyd. I will say that I answer for the things that he has done. I will say that I am *proud* to have stood at his elbow! I will go farther: I will say that I would not be afraid or ashamed to stand where he stands! I will say more!" he went on, his voice

booming above the feeble rapping of the judge's gavel. "I will say to this judge upon the sacred bench of justice, I will say to these sworn jurors, I will say to this community, to this County of Mohawk, I will say that if James Loyd be convicted of this thing, then it is not *he* who will be convicted! Rather, it will be this judge upon the bench, these jurors in the box, the citizens of this county, we, all of us, we it is who will be convicted, beeause we live here and allow these things to be possible!"

In the dead, breathless silence that followed, Winters' voice came out like an explosion:

"The witness is excused."

The Dean stepped down heavily, and, pausing only for one quick, quiet look at Loyd, he made his way to the door, and started up Court Street toward home. He was shaken, and he was not at ease with himself. He had done no good, he told himself, with his dramatics. And Winters, he saw now, had accomplished the very thing that he had set out to do. He saw now the hand of John Sargent.

It would make no difference in Milton, of course. But Jim Loyd's case was already receiving a lot of space in the New York papers, and he realized what they would look like tomorrow morning, when they would have garbled up Winters' assumptions and his own answers into testimony and evidence. Reporters would be besieging the bishop's door before noon to-

morrow. And, next to sin, the bishop hated sensation above all things.

He saw that a shrewd man, a man shrewder even than John Sargent, had suggested this. But he did not know that so great and so shrewd a man as Jasper Macon, the wiliest and boldest strategist in all America, had thrown the stone that had landed in his pond.

He had no fear of reproof from the bishop. No, that was perhaps the worst of it; the bishop would sorrowfully ignore the whole matter, giving no chance for explanation or understanding.

And people, so many people through the country would misread and misunderstand.

It was Christmas Eve. John Sargent was preparing his Christmas presents. It was going to be a green Christmas. A week of untimely warm weather and rains had taken away the snow, leaving sodden fields and black hillsides and mud, lakes of ugly, indecent mud. A green Christmas is a gray Christmas, a dreary, chilling, dampening season of forced cheer. The old people say that it makes a full churchyard. It is never welcome with us in the North country.

It looked in loweringly upon John Sargent where he sat in his private office in the Milton Machinery Company's plant going over the things that he had arranged for his Christmas greeting to various people.

First, there was a bulky package, heavily

sealed and covered with stamps, addressed to the office of the Attorney General of the United States. It was filled with records, affidavits, certified copies, rescripts, and documents, legal and illegal. These papers covered the doings, written and unwritten, of the International Farm Machine Company during the five years since its organization.

That corporation had recently come under the scrutiny of the Attorney General in the matter of certain rather flagrant violations of the laws of interstate commerce. The Government had instituted a suit looking to the dissolution of the corporation.

That corporation and its banker, Jasper Macon, had some time ago tried to ruin John Sargent—and that just at a time when he was at death grips with his employees and with the Governor of the State. He had considered it very unsportsmanlike and unkind rivalry. By way of a Christmas present to the International, he was now sending to the Attorney General, for his suit against that corporation, documentary evidence sufficient, if properly handled, to dissolve into atoms any corporation existing.

Also by way of Christmas present to the International and to Jasper Macon, he was sending out to his agents everywhere detailed selling orders, so that they might, at the critical moment of the suit against the International, dump upon the markets of this country and Europe great

quantities of farming machinery. The result of this would be that they would undersell the International into practical bankruptcy. He could not hurt Jasper Macon personally very much. But he believed that his Christmas present to Jasper Macon's pet combine, the International, would be its death warrant.

Through the District Attorney, Winters, he had already presented his Christmas greeting to "that old priest," the Dean of Milton. The Dean had received it in the trial-room of the court house, as we have seen.

Jim Loyd, he was confident, would receive his Christmas present to-day. It would be in the shape of a prison sentence. It could not be for more than ten years or for less than three. But Ichabod Whitcomb could be depended upon to make it nearer the former than the latter.

His present to Governor Gordon Fuller he had sent out this morning in the form of a statement to a group of Metropolitan newspapers. In it he had told the newspapers and the country that the board of arbitration which the Governor had created to settle the differences between the Milton Machinery Company and its employees was a ridiculous failure. He had announced his refusal to be bound by any of its findings. And he had told the country confidentially that the action of the Governor, in confiscating the Milton plant at the time of the strike and putting the men back to work under

martial law, had been, in so many words, nothing but a piece of political bravado and demagogy which the Governor had known he could not really carry out.

That completed the list of individual remembrances. It had been a long time since John Sargent had remembered so many people at Christmas.

There were, however, nearly four thousand men and about four hundred women for whom also John Sargent had arranged a Christmas greeting. These greetings were not directed to individuals. They were in the form of notices printed in squares of white cardboard, in plain black letters. About a hundred of these notices lay in a neat pile on John Sargent's desk. Because it was Christmas Eve, the entire plant would close down to-day at five o'clock. At five minutes to five, twenty clerks from the office would hurry down through the various rooms of the mill to tack up one of these notices on a board that hung beside the exit from each room. They would be read by, or translated to, five thousand people in less than five minutes.

John Sargent picked up one of the notices and read it reflectively. It ran:

All employees of this Company who on 3 May of this year voluntarily left their work to go on strike are, by this notice, discharged from the employ of this company. Time checks may

be presented at the Manufacturers National Bank on or after 26 December.

THE MILTON MACHINERY COMPANY.

While John Sargent had been feverishly driving his mill to double capacity in an effort to glut the markets and undersell his enemy, the International, he had been all the time preparing this Christmas greeting for his old employees.

He had finally come to the conclusion that his father's policy, and his own, had been a mistake. Once it may have been the part of wisdom to let the people take root in Milton, to let them own homes and thus bind them to the town and the mill. But it did not seem to be so now. It gave them the power to sustain a long strike. And in these days of fierce competition a long strike was too disastrous. What was worse, their feeling of independence and their increasing education made them ready to invite government interference. The more prosperous and advanced the town was, the more noise it could make. And wherever there was noise and agitation there was sure to rise up some notoriety-seeking official with a thirst to interfere.

So he had crowded his mill up with almost double the number of men and women that he would use when he should go back to normal conditions of running. He had trained two men for every job requiring skill and experience. He had trained two women for every machine. He

could drop every one of the old employees, below the ranks of the foremen, and go on with the new men at about the capacity and speed at which he had formerly run the plant.

From the schedule of the trial of Jim Loyd which was now drawing to a close up in the court house, he had figured that at about five o'clock to-day the jury would find Jim Loyd guilty. The judge would pronounce sentence immediately. He had told Winters to time the progress of the trial so that Jim Loyd should receive sentence at about the same moment at which the old employees of the Company were receiving their sentences. He dropped the notice on the desk and went out and down through the mill.

Down in the power-house, he looked out over the dark, sullen body of the river. The great pond, a lake almost, stretched broad and deep and black, away for miles, into the heart of the hills. The Maker of the Hills had formed here a great and ready servant and had given man dominion over that servant, a dominion without hire and without price; a servant that toiled on unceasingly, asking only for more work.

John Sargent loved the glum, silent river with its millions of horsepower lying in leash there between the hills. And not only because it worked for him for nothing: he loved it because it was dependable. It never tired, never had excuse, never failed.

Up out of the wheelpits, where the hands of

the river worked, came the shafts of steel and with their elbows of beveled gears turned the power of the river into the massive main shaft of the mill. To the main shaft were hitched the fourteen dynamos that turned the strength of the water into electric current. From them went out the slim arteries of lightning that lighted the furnaces, that turned the wheels and made John Sargent's mill a living thing.

Here men worked quietly, smoothly, oiling, cleaning, burnishing, dressing the dynamos for the Christmas rest. John Sargent went about running a critical finger over polished surfaces of brass and copper and steel, for these were costly tools, these dynamos. A little rust, a little drip, might easily stand him the loss of ten thousand dollars.

Satisfied, he climbed a ladder, stepped through a door in the wall and came out upon the runways of the furnace room. Here all was fever and hurry, men rushing about here and there, great cranes snapping their loads jerkily into the air, furnaces flaring up to the leaden sky. To the unskilled eye it would have been a chaos of undirected fury. To John Sargent's grim eye, as he took in the state of the room at a glance, it all meant that every man was hurrying so that all the furnaces might be cleared at the stroke of five, and all be free to go. "They wouldn't jump that way for me if I was sweating blood to get them to hurry," he muttered to

himself. "Well, they can rush now. A lot of them'll have plenty of time to rest."

The casting-room, when he came to it, was one bank of impenetrable, murky fog that came crowding in from the damp air outside and that rose from the sizzling puddles of metal. Only the nearest of the electric bulbs blinked feebly through the gloom and showed now and then a black head or a naked shoulder as some man partly emerged from the murk. It might have been a bottomless pit, with now and then a restless soul pushing up to the surface.

The milling-room was crowded to the last inch of available working space with men whose minds and bodies seemed keyed to the single thought that they were to handle as many pieces of iron as it was possible for human hands to turn in a given time. They were piece-workers nearly all, trained to the last second of accurate speed, and ever trying to crowd an extra movement into that second.

All about them lathes whirred and whined their complaint and drills shrieked as they bit into the iron, but the men drove on silently, measuring the pieces of iron that they drilled and turned against the racing of the seconds on the clock.

John Sargent disliked this room. There was too much hand-work here. The eight hundred clever, high-priced workmen in this room always irritated him. They were the men who did most

of the thinking and the talking for the rest of the mill. Agitations, committees, delegations with differences and complaints generally found their brains and their spokesmen in this room. These men were readers and talkers. They were full of arguments on the cost of materials, on profits, on the value of the labor put into the product.

Their work was almost entirely mechanical, he argued. The motions they made could be made just as accurately by machinery—and faster. Why could he not clear them all out and make machines take their places? The trouble was that each man of them had to do just a little bit of thinking with each piece of work. A little, a very little, but it was just that little bit of thinking that a machine would not do. When would they give him machines, machines that he could buy outright and hitch to his shaft, that would do just that little bit of thinking for him?

There was little Joe Page on his high stool at a lathe. Just because he could do that very little bit of thinking that a machine would not do, John Sargent had to clothe him and feed and bed him.

He came out now into the enormous, open, sky-lighted assembling-room where the bed frames of the machines were set up and the "travelers" came hurrying in from all directions with pieces and dropped them almost magically into place in the frames. This was what John Sargent loved to watch, the setting-up of the complete machines, ready to be run upon the

cars. What man does not love to see the turned-out ready product of his own hand or brain? Here were results. Here was money that could be counted.

He was willing to pay the twelve hundred men who worked in this room. He did not begrudge it. Their work was heavy. They were not paid for mere thinking.

Last of all there was the twine-mill. Such daylight as there had been was gone now. The arc-light sputtered fitfully up and down the endless rows of machines. Seven hundred women, ranging in years from fourteen to sixty, stood here in one barnlike room, bending to the endless nursing and feeding of the insatiable winders.

The wooden floor under their feet was wet and spongy. The air of the room was filled with cloudy wreaths and spirals of condensing steam, released into the room because the twine fiber must be kept damp while it was being worked. Their clothing was soaked through and through with the mist of the condensing steam. Their hair, tightly wound into unsightly knobs to keep it from the snatching arms of the winders, was sprinkled over with great, glistening jewels of water and tar vapor from the spray baths through which the twine was run.

Through the streaked smudges upon their faces ran the cruel, bitter lines of heart-breaking fatigue. They were unlovely, unsightly, and

they did not care. Their feet were swollen; they ached in every nerve from the endless strain of standing in one cramped position; their heads swam with pain and blood congestion back of the eyes; but their nimble, automatic fingers ran swiftly in and out among the hooks of the winders.

Some, the stronger ones who had a little of strength or nerve left, were racing to finish a certain amount of work. But for the most part they merely held on blindly to the pace of the machines before them.

Across the room from John Sargent stood a bent, white-haired woman, her hands weaving steadily in and out among the clutching hooks. There was nothing to distinguish her white head, the skin drawn drum-tight at the temples, or her quivering, thin body from plenty of others about her. But, somehow, it seemed to John Sargent that he ought to remember her. There was *something* in some way familiar about her. He *did* remember her. She was Milly Ashley. Forty years ago, he remembered, she was the prettiest, sauciest girl in the old Academy of Milton.

She had married somebody. They all do, for some reason or other, he reflected. And here she was in her old age down to this. It was too bad.

As he watched, the woman's hands left the winder and rose gracefully in the air. She swayed back a little from the machine and waved

her hands in easy, measured gestures to the time of something that she began to recite. John Sargent could not hear what she said, but from the gestures and the even motions of her lips it was evidently a part of some poem.

The girl next to her caught the raving woman and half lifted, half dragged her out to the safety of the aisle. Nonie Gaylor, superintendent of this mill, appeared from somewhere and directed two stout, elderly women to help the woman to the dressing-room. There was no panic, no shrieking, no disorder. These things were of common occurrence. John Sargent admired for a moment the efficient, time-saving way in which the affair had been handled.

Then Nonie Gaylor came back and did a strange thing. The woman's machine was still running. Nonie Gaylor stepped into the vacant place and went on with the woman's work. She had been doing piece-work and the few pennies would mean something to her.

John Sargent did not like this. The Gaylor girl should remember that he paid for her time to superintend the whole mill, not to run a single machine. He would step over and tell her so. But just then a boy from the office appeared at his elbow and began tacking a notice on the board by the door. Sargent turned in the doorway and went back toward his office.

He had not gone twenty steps from the door when he heard a scream. Anne Casimir had

slipped over and read the notice. Screaming and sobbing fearfully, she threw herself upon a bale of twine fiber. In an instant every machine in the room was deserted. This was not merely a case of a girl fainting or in hysteria.

Scrambling, tearing, pulling, they fought their way by platoons up to the billboard, howling out the notice in five languages to those behind. Some one tore the notice down and they jumped and stamped upon it in frenzy, while Nonie Gaylor and her forewomen tried futilely to head them back to their places.

A stout girl grabbed a heavy floor-mop and swinging with all her strength jammed it down into the rapidly revolving arms and clutches of an expensive duplex stripper. That was all that was needed. The fierce, leaping fury for destruction ran over them like a driven fire. In two minutes the room was a wreck.

In vain did Nonie Gaylor and her forewomen, aided by a few thoughtful ones, herd them out of the room in droves. They rushed back to their work by other doors. Then the power went off. Now they could not smash things so easily. It palled.

With one impulse they rushed pell-mell and screaming from the room. Stamping and howling they trooped down through the mill, through the parts where no woman was allowed to go, until they came shrieking into the big assembling room. Here the greater part of the men were

standing, helpless and dumb. Some were shouting foolish and half-hearted threats. Some were frankly crying. Others were cursing futilely. Like a raging tornado the women and girls came tearing in among them, shouting:

"Do something! You cowards, do something! We've smashed our room!"

"Why don't you do *something!*"

"If Loyd was here!"

Loyd! As if they had been waiting for that word, it seemed to wake the men to life. It ran out of that room and through the next and on down through the whole mill like a cry of fire. Men went hurtling over each other out of every exit of the plant. In twenty seconds the mill-yard and the street outside were jammed with a roaring, seething mass of men and women, shouting, chanting, and screaming over and over the one word: "Loyd! Loyd! Loyd!" They knew where they were going and what they were going to do.

In the court house the trial of Loyd was being hurried to its appointed close. The last witness of the prosecution had been brought forward to strain Loyd's words and actions to a proof of his guilt. While it was admitted to have been physically impossible for Loyd to have been near the scene of the explosion of the stockhouse of the Sargent plant, yet the facts, that he had kept explosives in his possession, that he had apparently

intended to use them, that he was of a violent and terrible temper, stopping at nothing in his anger —all these had been plaited together to make a rope of conviction.

In vain Stanley Morgan had entered his last monotonous and useless exception to the judge's rulings. He had tried to show that not a single bit of real evidence had been introduced bearing upon the actual charge. He had tried to go past the judge and get at the feelings of the jurymen through their sense of fair play. But he knew that he had failed. Those men had been put upon that jury because the majority of them were so placed that they would not dare vote for any verdict other than the one John Sargent demanded. And the others would do what the stronger will of the majority would force them to do.

In his summing up for the defense he had appealed to every American sense of justice and manhood. He had shown that the case was one of flagrant and malicious perversion of justice. But as well might he have talked to the graven scales upon the wall, and expected them to tip.

Winters, concluding for the "State," was a marvel of skilled and hypocritical moderation. He did not denounce. He deplored. He was sorry; he was pained. But the facts were such and such and such, as the jury had seen. The "State," he said, had no feeling whatever in the matter. Jim Loyd had been entitled to the pro-

tection of the law as was every other citizen. But he had defied the law. For fancied wrongs he had taken revenge into his own hands. And the "State" had reluctantly, almost, seen itself obliged to act.

Through all this Jim Loyd sat grim and unmoved, his eyes and his mind, apparently, fixed upon a knot in the floor below him.

The judge in his charge to the jury did not stoop to use any of the suave duplicity which had marked the speech of the District Attorney. Ichabod Whitcomb was a blunt and brutal man by nature, and his methods were coarse. He did not confine himself to instructing the jury upon the law of the case, as he was strictly bound to do. He went out of his way to point out to the jurors lines of reasoning, by following which they must properly bring in a verdict of guilty. He so construed to them the law and the value of evidence and the force of the particular evidence in this case that there seemed nothing left for the jury to do but to find the prisoner guilty.

And even through this, the contamination of justice at the fountain-head, Loyd sat unblinking. He was waiting for the very end. Long since, he had come to the conclusion that the Law, the State, Society, Justice, all were simply names for The Will of the Strong. So far it appeared that John Sargent, with the things that he could buy and command, represented that will of the

strong. Well, he would see this farce to the end, and then—and then he would see farther.

In the jury-room on the first ballot the vote was nine for conviction, three for acquittal. The nine went to work upon the three. In the second ballot the vote was eleven for conviction, one for acquittal. A little druggist from Greenville was holding out. Before the next ballot was formally taken, he, too, had given in to the will of the majority.

The jury filed solemnly back to their places in the trial-room.

"Gentlemen of the jury," came the traditional query from the bench, "have you reached a verdict?"

"We have."

But Jim Loyd was not listening. From down the street there came to his ears a many-throated roar, the roar of a multitude of men in rage, pierced thinly by the shrill, high cries of women. He was listening to that.

"What is your verdict? Is the prisoner guilty or not guilty?"

But Jim Loyd did not wait to hear the single word. He quietly snubbed the wrist chain across the railing, vaulted the rail in a spring, and, bringing his whole weight down upon his forearm as a lever, snapped the chain. Three steps on the floor, and he was surrounded by a dozen men who had leaped forward at his first motion.

The jail guard drew his revolver and fired once, in the air. It would have been murder to have fired indiscriminately into the crowd. Jim Loyd was already covered, swallowed up in a whirling, crashing, irresistible mass of men struggling toward the doors. In another moment he was out in the street, the center and the master of four thousand raging men.

He was going to see whose was The Will of the Strong.

CHAPTER XIV

AS GOD MADE HIM

With head bared to the drizzle of the raw, misty evening Jim Loyd stood in the street in front of the court house. His big shoulders heaved above the heads of the smaller men about him, as his lungs gulped in great panting breaths of the air of freedom which they had not known for months.

He looked back at the court house from which he had just come. It was the place of justice. It stood for the community. It represented the State. It was the stronghold of Society.

In there men had found him guilty of a crime against Society which he had not committed. Justice, as they called it, had gone out of its way to deprive him of his liberty, to brand him as a thing to be shunned and walled up. The State had spent its money to convict him. Society had decreed that he was not fit for Society.

Society had tried and found him guilty. But Society had not given him a fair trial.

On the other hand, during the months in jail and the days in the courtroom, during his whole life, in fact, he had given Society an absolutely fair trial. From the day when, in his first pair of trousers, he had trudged manfully into John

Sargent's mill to begin his work, right down to the instant in which he snapped the chain in leaping from the prisoner's box in the court house, he had done all the things that Society had prescribed for him. And Society had been untrue to its side of the contract with him.

He had found Society guilty; guilty not so much of a particular offense against him, but guilty of being a lie. It *was* a lie, this thing that men called Society. He had found a true bill. Society, the State, was nothing more or less than the will of a few, who, being rich, were strong.

And why were they strong? Was it that the accident of their wealth gave them some mysterious power over the many? No. It was because the many, who were the truly strong, foolishly let themselves be worked and herded by the will of the few.

Here were the strong—four thousand strong—ready to follow him anywhere!

They surged and eddied around him, shouting and cheering his name. They had turned to him in their hour of desperation. They had come to tear him from the grasp of the law that they might have a leader. And he had done what they might have expected of him. He had not waited for them, had not needed them. He had flouted the law in its very face, and had come out to meet them. It was just the single-handed, dramatic sort of thing that they would have looked for from him.

Warden Wheeler, two deputy sheriffs, and four jail guards came running around the corner from the direction of the jail. With shotguns held stiffly before them, they prodded a lane into the crowd, making straight for where Loyd stood. In front of the seven armed men the crowd gave back, rapidly at first, then slower and slower. Finally those directly in front of the guns found that they could not back another inch. They stood stock still. The seven with the loaded guns halted, perforce. There was nothing else that they could do, short of drilling a path through the crowd with buckshot.

Fred Wheeler was a brave man. He had been the warden of Mohawk County jail for fourteen years. No prisoner had ever escaped from him. Personally, Loyd was his friend; he wished to see him at liberty. Nevertheless, he was going to fight his way through that crowd, at whatever risk, to put Loyd back in jail. It was a matter of course, the course of his duty—his business.

He jammed his gun viciously into the breast of the man before him and laid his finger on the trigger. Only then did he see that the man was his own older brother, Martin Wheeler.

The gun wavered, a very little. It was enough.

Martin Wheeler struck the gun a quick upward blow with his open hand, and sprang in, under the arms of his brother.

Like the snapping of a trap, the crowd crunched in upon the seven. There was no time, no chance to fire. One gun discharged its load into a man's foot. The seven, crushed by sheer weight, their guns trampled under foot, were rushed and hustled back around the corner and pushed into the jail door.

Loyd stood looking on. It was ridiculously easy! Those seven men represented the might of the law. They made up most of the available force of Mohawk County. What scarecrows and things of straw the law and the county really were, when strong men put their hands upon them!

The crowd came reeling back around him again. But there was a change. Loyd was quick to note it.

The crowd had done something. Its blood was rising. It was feeling its strength. It was looking for something else to do. It had tasted its own power, and the rage and desperation that had before been numb in it was boiling to the surface.

The doors of the court house had been slammed to and locked. The judge, jury, and court attendants must be inside. The crowd surged up to them and began to beat upon them.

They would have the judge out! They would string him up! Where was the jury? Mob them! Fire the court house! Burn it down!

Loyd saw the boyish, silly folly of it all. The

crowd would simply work itself up to commit some vicious thing, to destroy somebody or something. And then its anger would suddenly sputter out. Men would look at each other and slink away, by twos and threes and dozens, to their homes. Once there, they would climb into bed and begin to shiver—wondering how they might prove alibis. In the morning, the will of the few would reassert itself. The law of the land—John Sargent, in this instance—would be stronger than ever.

In that one bitter flash of insight, Loyd saw why the will of the few, backed by tradition and fear, had always been able to dominate the many. He saw—what John Sargent had sneered at, months before—the sort of tools he had to work with.

But he went swiftly to work.

His own men, the men who had worked under him and with him, in the mill and during the strike, stood close about him, wondering why he had not made a move. These were men whom he could trust, men whom he had seen tried and grilled in many ways.

His orders were short and simple. Four men would take possession of each of the two telephone exchanges in the town. They were not to touch a wire or interfere with messages coming in. But they were to see that no message of any kind went out from the town during the night, or until they were relieved.

Others would do the same at the Western Union offices.

"A little time is all I want," he said. "The Sheriff'll be yelling to Albany for help, just as soon as his teeth stop rattling. On the run! *Quick!*"

The men broke through the crowd and started for their posts.

To others he snapped out short, curt commands:

"Break them fools away from the court house doors. They think they want a bonfire! Start them moving, and keep them moving—after me."

Without another word, or even a look at the crowd, he pushed out into the middle of the street and started toward State Street.

The effect upon the crowd—if he had looked to see it—might well have turned his head. His lieutenants dove into the crowd around the court house doors, banging men and women right and left, and shouting his commands. But the crowd did not need any such measures. At the one word—that it was an order from Loyd—the hysteria of destruction that had been mounting up in the men fell from them. They turned sharply and faced solidly down the street after their leader. The women stopped their screaming and hurried along quietly.

From a headless, senseless mob, the crowd had become, on the instant, an army of quiet, devoted men. They had a purpose, a work to be done.

The women quickly sensed the change that had come over the men. There were things to be done by the men, in the ways of men. The women seemed to realize that they would be of little use now. All but the boldest and strongest of them dropped unnoticed from the crowd and went to their homes.

The men, four wide on the broad sidewalks under the elms, thirty wide from curb to curb of the widened street, crowded swiftly ahead. They stretched across four or five deep in front of Loyd, a hundred or more deep behind him, a compact column of nearly four thousand silent, grim-faced men.

Loyd had heard how, just at the moment of shutting down the mill for Christmas, John Sargent had discharged all of his old employees at a sweep. There were other men in the town, the new workmen, whom Sargent had brought in since the strike, and whom Loyd did not know. But he had no trouble from these latter.

During the long months that he had paced his little cell in the jail, he had worked out every possible detail and angle of this night's work, even to the individual men whom he should choose for each piece of the work.

He would have no rioting. He would give no chance for plunder or window-smashing or any of the things that men expected when a mob went loose. He was going about the business with none of the hot rage that would have hurried him

into it three months ago. Then he would have been the wild leader of a wild, unthinking crowd of men. Now he was the leader of an appointed army, moving toward a definite object. It was an avenging army, to be sure. For John Sargent must die—there was no other way. He saw it now.

But, that done—John Sargent once removed, his army was an army not of destruction but of accomplishment.

He knew that other men had started on the path that he was taking. He knew that mobs had risen and had seemed to be supreme, plenty of times. And he knew why they had failed. Their leaders had allowed them to waste their strength in furies of destruction and revenge.

John Sargent must die. Yes. He saw that this would be inevitable. *But it must end there!* Things must go on. The mill and the work must go on. The town must not be harmed. They were simply going to put the will of the *real* strong, the will of themselves, in the place of the will of John Sargent. It would be merely a change of rulers. Nothing else should be changed.

They swung solidly around the corner in to the broad stretch of State Stret. A single policeman standing at the corner was brushed lightly into the door of a store. The crowd scarcely felt or noticed him. Loyd wondered for a moment why the police were not already out in such force

as they had. The Sheriff surely would have called them by now. Not that the thirty policemen on the force of Milton would have stopped his march for an instant, he merely wondered why he had not already met them.

In front of the Farmers Exchange Bank, he stopped long enough to order out twelve men, with instructions to arm themselves as best they could and guard the bank. They were to allow no one to enter or leave the bank under any conditions. It might work a hardship upon the two or three officials who were probably still in the bank, but he must guard against them as well. They might call an automobile and attempt to carry the available cash in the bank to Herkimer or Utica. Loyd was determined that everything in Milton should remain as it was and where it was.

Coming down into the busy part of the street, where the larger stores were grouped along both sides of the way, he picked out men right and left, one to take his stand at the door of each store. The stores were to be kept open. The street must be orderly and safe, so that people might go about their Christmas Eve buying as usual.

At the second bank, the "Manufacturers," he halted the line and pushed his way up to the entrance. This was the bank from which John Sargent drew his payroll. Loyd knew that the men whom Sargent had discharged had been notified that they might present their time checks

here, after Christmas Day. He did not propose that all those families should be left without money for Christmas.

The curtains of the bank were down, of course. But he knew that old Nathan Fairchild and his clerks would still be in there, clearing up the heavy holiday accounts. He kicked vigorously on the door, while the silent crowd behind him stood and wondered.

First he heard a muttering of commands and a scurrying of feet within. Then came the clang of bolts as the door of the vault was slammed and locked. Finally he heard a slow step coming toward the door and the curtain ran up. Nathan Fairchild, his long, cadaverous face looking the color of wood-ashes in the light from the street, stood peering out through the glass, a wobbling revolver in each of his palsied hands.

"Drop the guns, Mr. Fairchild," said Loyd coolly, but in a voice that carried easily through the door. "You won't be hurt. We could turn your bank inside out, and you know it. But we're not going to do it. You're going to open this door and let me talk sense to you. Do you hear?"

Old Nathan Fairchild's hands were trembling, but his mind was working swiftly and clearly. He ought to shoot. He had good reasons to do so. The man was an escaped criminal. He was attempting to enter the bank by force. The mob

out there, left without a leader, would be frightened and break up—perhaps.

He took a firmer grip on one of the guns. Loyd's big body stood full up in front of the glass, not eighteen inches from the point of the gun.

Fairchild's mind worked on. A mob without a leader, might—might be worse than a mob with a leader.

"You're taking no risk, Mr. Fairchild," said Loyd quickly, keeping his eyes on the eyes of the old man. "I come in alone." He waved his hand backwards at the crowd of men behind him. They fell back instantly to the edge of the sidewalk.

That move settled Nathan Fairchild. His whole life had been spent bowing to authority. Here was authority. He opened the door.

"Nothing has happened," said Loyd, as he stepped inside; "nor is going to happen to bother you. This town has changed hands. That's all. Just now I am the only protection you can find in this town. Do what I tell you. You will be protected. And there'll be no blame for you—afterward, from anybody. I'll put a guard here strong enough to protect you against anything that could possibly happen. Keep your tellers working until ten o'clock, so that the people can cash their time checks to-night if they want to. Then go home and go to bed. Your bank will be

as safe as—as it was last night. And—oil them rusty old pistols of yours," he said grimly, as he stood in the open door and beckoned to the guards whom he had already numbered out. "You could be locked up for attempted suicide."

He stepped quickly out into the crowd and started his army moving down the street. He was not elated with the ease with which he had so far accomplished the things which he had set out to do. He was glad that it had been so easy and simple, but he knew that he was now coming to the first real test of his strength and his power over the men who followed him.

State Street from here right down to the bridge was lined on both sides with saloons, cheap restaurants and cheaper lodging-houses. In a distance of less than three short city blocks there were thirty-four saloons. John Sargent held the license of every one of them. Through them, aided by the indifference and carelessness of the people, he controlled Mohawk County.

Loyd knew that he dared not go farther until he had closed every one of these saloons. It would be madness to pass them, to leave them in his rear. Before morning they would be more of a menace to his plans and his men than would a regiment of state troops.

It was Christmas Eve. Despite the fact that more than half of all the men of Milton were lined up in the street behind Loyd, the saloons were full and doing a roaring, shouting business.

There was excitement in the air. Loyd was ready to do something big, men said. There would be real trouble.

Loyd saw that he would have to fight his way down the street. It would not be easy to clean out and close all these places. He feared the demoralizing effect of the fighting upon his own forces. But there was no other way.

"Break into gangs," his command flew along the line. "Pile into the saloons. Throw everybody out—drunk and sober. Make them put lights out and lock up. Quick! No noise about it!"

His men leaped through the swinging doors. Imperturbable bartenders and sleek proprietors demanded to know what the "rough-house" meant, and reached for ready weapons. But when they saw expensive glass and fixtures being ground up in the mêlée they were glad enough to help in the work of clearing their places and to switch off their lights and lock up.

So swift and sudden was the onslaught of the men from the street that the first block was cleared before the second block had heard what was happening. It was slower and more difficult as they progressed down the street, for as each saloon emptied its men into the street Loyd's men soon found that they had several hundred half drunken, ugly men before them whom they must push on down ahead of them. Loyd had foreseen and feared this. He did not want trouble

with these men. But there was no time now for argument or reasoning.

He leaped to the head of his men and where he had to strike he struck hard. The struggling, swearing mass of men in front, growing constantly larger and heavier, fought back viciously. But the press behind Loyd came rolling down upon them and they were slammed and jammed the length of the street and out onto the bridge. Here Loyd left them.

Quickly heading his men up River Road toward the mill, he turned for a look up State Street. Every place was closed and dark. The street, except for his own patrols, was deserted. He was satisfied. The town was absolutely under control. It would give him no trouble.

His real objective remained—the mill. For half a mile it lay stretched along between the river and the road, a shapeless, dark, sinister thing that took life and gave life. He had not seen it since the night when he had picked up the dead body of his brother lying at the mill gate. His soul and body shook in a spasm of choking hate at sight of the black, formless hulk of buildings. He could tear it stone from stone, girder from girder, and hurl it all down into the chasm of the lower river. And yet he loved it. Loved the great, brutish, strong thing that worked so beautifully, with its thousand arms and its million fingers and its great splay feet of concrete set in the solid rock under the river. If he could

have owned it or managed it, how he would have nursed the hideous, powerful thing, and tended it and driven it!

And there was Sargent up there in the office, the brain and the will of it all. John Sargent must die to-night. There was no room for the faintest hope that he could be overcome or that he would submit short of death. John Sargent would fight on his own threshold. That was sure. Loyd's orders to his men as they marched up the road to the mill gates anticipated that.

"Leave Sargent alone," his word ran down the line. "He is my business." And, to himself, he added, "I'm a criminal already: I've got little to lose."

It is not easy to see to the full what was in Loyd's mind at that moment.

He had captured the town. He would certainly capture the mill. And, as certainly, he would kill John Sargent.

What then? That would be to-night's work. What would be to-morrow's? Did he think that he could hold the town and the mill and run both indefinitely in the face of the power of the State?

Did he think that the removal of John Sargent, whose will had always been the will of the strong—the actual government of Mohawk County, would really change anything?

Did he think that his example here would be the signal for the rising of hundreds of thousands of mill workers in New York, of millions

throughout the country, to seize their mills and run them themselves? If he expected this, or even if he believed it possible, then we could understand him. But it is not likely that he looked for anything of the kind.

He was a saturnine man, looking darkly upon things, prone to see failure and disappointment. He had no illusions. He had none of the large, vague, glowing optimism and enthusiasm of the born leaders of causes.

No. It is not likely that he expected ultimate success for his plan. His mind was quick and clear and big enough to weigh all the forces against him. Probably, as he marched along at the head of his men, he saw that the plainest result of his plan would be his own death. But he went forward as a man goes whom fate has set upon an appointed road. Good would come of it in the end, somewhere. For the rest—his way lay before him, open. He would walk it.

The big main gate was locked and heavily barred. He drew up his men in the broad, open space in front of it, and ordered heavy shafts brought from the scrap pile to be used as rams in battering down the gate. Within the heavy stockade of the mill there seemed to be neither sound nor stir. But Loyd was not deceived. He knew that John Sargent was within there, and he knew that he was not alone.

At the word, twenty men on each side of the

gate ran charging forward driving the shafts into the hinges. The lower hinges gave in with a crash, and mingling with the crash came the sharp snapping of thirty revolvers through the loop-holes of the stockade.

Loyd now knew where the police force of Milton was. It was lined up inside the stockade of John Sargent's mill. Milton, its homes, its stores, its property of every kind, might have been swept away by the mob. The police who were paid to protect it were needed to do work for their overlord, John Sargent.

Loyd did not stop to see the effect of the shooting upon his men. He grasped one of the shafts as it came driving in to the gate again and threw his strength in with that of the men. That side of the gate went down, and before it had come to the ground Loyd went hurdling through, yelling to the men who leaped after him:

"Crowd up the sides and smother 'em!"

The crowd pouring in behind the leaders pushed down the other half of the gate, so that a stream of men, ten abreast, was soon tearing through the gateway. They divided and swept along the fence to right and left in such living torrents that the police were rushed off their feet and hurled up against the fence. The policemen had brothers, some of them had fathers in that crowd of workingmen. Also, they saw that they were beaten and that they would be badly han-

dled. They dropped their revolvers and began using their clubs merely to keep themselves from being crushed to death against the fence.

Loyd, seeing that the police were now harmless, called his men for a rush upon the three doors that led from the court where they were standing into the three different parts of the mill that abutted there.

The main door of the furnace-room was on one side. The milling-room opened on the other. A long, covered passage, wide enough for six men abreast, ran through to the door of the big assembling room.

Loyd, shouting to others to storm the doors on each side, grabbed one of the shafts and started running alone with it down the covered passage. Fifty men followed him, running to pick up the trailing end of the shaft and help. Running with head down, he had gone half the length of the passage when he heard a roar of warning behind. He did not look up, but he heard the crash of glass ahead of him as a dozen magazine rifles were pushed through the windows beside the door toward which he was racing.

He felt the thud of the other end of the heavy shaft, as the men who had been carrying it dropped it to run.

A rush of wind down the narrow passage nearly threw him from his feet as the volley from the rifles swept past him.

He gripped the shaft again and charged on.

He was not hit! They could not hit him! He was Jim Loyd! He had work to do! Until that work was done, the bullet was not made that could hurt him.

The shaft was heavier than he had thought. But he was going on. Men behind begged and prayed him to come back. But he was going on.

Another volley came whistling down the passage. But this time he was braced for it. He was going on. A tuft of hair fell shorn from his black head. He was going on. A bullet flattened itself on the end of the shaft at his hand. He was going on.

The door that he was running for was sunken into an embrazure the full depth of the thick wall. He looked up, measured the time for another volley, fell upon his face as it roared over him, gathered himself and the shaft for the last short run.

At ten feet from the door he was fairly safe from the rifles at the sides. With a mighty heave, he brought the two-hundred-pound shaft up shoulder high, and with short quick steps ran lunging at the door with it.

The shaft, driven by its weight and all the power of the man behind it, shot cleanly through the sheet-iron facing and the wood of the door.

The big door stood unshaken, the shaft sticking from it like an arrow. And there the shaft stayed. He could not draw it back for another blow!

He tugged and pulled and strained at the shaft trying to draw it out: Strained till the blood started from his ears and nostrils: Strained till the top of his head seemed to lift itself up and float away!

It was fast, and useless!

Then Jim Loyd forgot himself. He struck and kicked at the iron shaft in an agony of helpless madness.

Here he was a prisoner, he could not go forward. To go back was useless death. Howling, he threw himself upon the useless shaft.

Here he was: Jim Loyd, the strong man, the man of iron, the man who had taken a town! Here he was, helpless as a puling child, listening to the shots fired into his scattered men! Sobbing and screaming in fury he beat with bare, bleeding hands upon the sheathed door.

Those within must have known that he was alone. It was a mark of the respect in which they held him that they did not open the door and try to take him. But he did not remember to take any pleasure in the compliment they paid him. Just then he had forgotten that he was a man—he was trying to tear off the iron sheathing of the door with his teeth.

His men had scattered. An army could not have gone down that passageway. There was no blame for them.

They had snatched two wounded men and a

girl out of danger and then they had faded away swiftly out of the open court.

They ran along under the dark walls of the mill, keeping away from doors. Along three sides of the milling and the furnace-rooms, they were breaking every window with whatever iron weapon came to hand and piling each other through the windows in tangled, clawing masses.

In heaps of two and three and four, they spilled themselves in upon the floor of the mill, and picking themselves up in the dark they ran craftily between the machines they knew so well and fell silently upon their enemies.

Men with deadly guns in their hands were struck down and stunned before they knew that danger was near. Away from every door and from every stand of defense they drove Sargent's guards, until they had herded them all into the casting-room.

They found Loyd unhurt, at the door of the assembling-room. He gave a last, vicious kick at the shaft that had put him to shame; and came in to take command.

The casting-room was a ready-made fortress. There were no windows in its walls. Its one wide open door could be defended indefinitely by the guns of the men within. Its roof was open but it could not be reached for it was many feet higher than any other roof near it.

The men within were employees of a nation-

wide so-called detective agency. Their business was to fight with guns for whoever hired them. Sargent had brought them here one by one and had given them ostensible jobs in the mill. None of the men who had worked beside them for weeks had suspected them in any way. About fifty of them were now drawn up behind a barricade of castings just inside the casting-room door.

Their rifles were of the best and newest type. They were men who had fought together before against big odds. And they knew that they could expect no mercy if they were beaten.

Loyd and his men stood in the darkness of the furnace-room. They were beginning to understand the nature of the enemy with whom they had to deal, and what they had already gone through had made them thoughtful.

Not a light had yet been turned on in the mill. Loyd and his men preferred to trust to the dark and their own sure-footed knowledge of every floor and obstruction in the rooms. The guards inside the casting-room evidently felt that there was light enough for them to train their guns upon that one door. They had no other immediate use for light.

It was a deadlock. Loyd realized it. And, knowing that time was precious, knew that he must somehow break it. But, how? Bravery against that ring of gun-muzzles inside that door would not be bravery. It would be senseless and

criminal folly—like his own maniacal dash against the door outside.

The slight creaking of a rope overhead told him that some one was trying to do something. A whisper came through the dark to him, that little Joe Page, the dwarf and one-time circus clown, had found a rope dangling down from the car of the "traveler" which ran into the casting-room. He was climbing the rope up to the rail of the "traveler," so that he could make his way along the rail into the casting-room and get down to the high pressure hose.

Loyd calculated the chances, and, in the dark, he bowed his head before the deliberate, quiet bravery of the little, deformed man.

To do his work, the little man would have to climb forty feet of swaying rope. Then, hanging from the rail of the "traveler" by one hand, he would have to detach the rope from where it was fastened and coil it around his neck so that he could carry it. Then he would have to go, hanging from the rail by his little fourteen-inch arms, hand over hand a distance of two hundred feet. Fifty feet of that distance would be within the casting-room where his little body would show against the open skylight of that room. When he came to the proper place—if he had not already been shot down—he would have to attach the rope and let himself down twenty feet and swing in the dark to a platform, where

the high-pressure fire-nozzle was set in a swivel ready to be turned upon any part of the room.

The suspense was maddening. Men loved that little, malformed man with the giant's heart, creeping away up there in the dark to an almost certain death. In the dark, it came to them that everything in all this world depended on the little fellow's getting through safe. You will find men walking the streets of Milton to-day whose hair is gray. It turned gray that night. But they will tell you that it turned gray, not when they were facing bullets, but when they were standing waiting to know the fate of that little man.

Loyd started them to making feinting rushes toward the door of the casting-room. Shouting and throwing pieces of resounding iron, they went charging up along the wall almost to the door. Each time they were apparently driven back by the short, stabbing grunts of the high-powered rifles and a hail of lead came spattering among the furnaces. But all the time they were cramming themselves up closer and closer on each side of the door, and every flash of a rifle was blinding its owner to little Joe, and giving that little man a better knowledge of the position of his target.

The swish of the heavy stream as it caught the guards in the flank and lifted them bodily from behind their barricade, was the signal for Loyd's men. They tumbled through the door

and fell upon their enemy. They rolled joyfully into the water, clawing about for the other men and crushing them, already half drowned, under the weight of their numbers.

At a flash the whole room leaped out into brilliant light. Blinking in the glare and shaking water from their eyes, men looked up to see John Sargent standing at a door cut high up in the wall of the room, his hand on the electric switch. He looked down at the wallowing, half-drowned mass of fighting men upon the floor. He looked at the little man over against the other wall busy with the hose. He drew a revolver. And before any one could shout to the little man, John Sargent shot little Joe Page through the head.

The dwarf lifted his hands in the old salute of the tanbark ring, and toppled off the platform.

With one hoarse roar men threw from them the prisoners they had just taken. They threw themselves madly at the door of the room and swept out through other rooms in a rush for the stairways.

They growled and panted and fairly whined to be allowed to get John Sargent before he could reach his office.

But John Sargent was ahead of them. He stood in the door of his office, pistol in hand, as they came leaping up the stairs, Loyd in the lead.

The men scarcely noticed that one of the first up the stairs after Loyd was a recruit: A tall

old man, with a cassock drawn up to his knees. It was the Dean of Milton, Father Driscoll, who had heard the shooting just as he was stepping into the confessional.

"Stand back," shouted Loyd, as he reached the level.

"This is *my* business!"

He circled away a little from the men behind, so that they would not be in the line of Sargent's fire, and then walked straight toward the man in the doorway.

At six paces, Sargent fired. Loyd dropped to one knee with the falling of the hammer, and before Sargent could move his finger again Loyd was upon him, twisting the gun from his hand and reaching for his throat.

In that instant, something strange happened in John Sargent. Loyd felt it. It was something imperious. Something that would not be denied. Something that would have no interference.

Loyd's hand dropped back nerveless from the throat. He felt the body stiffen on his arm. Again he put his hand to the throat. Again it dropped.

Father Driscoll stood beside the two men.

"*It is not your business,* Jimmie!"

Loyd staggered back shaking as the old priest took the burden from his arms.

Afterward, when they had laid John Sargent on his cot in the office, and Father Driscoll was

working over him, Loyd plucked at the priest's sleeve, saying in a choking whisper:

"I tried. I tried, Father. I had my hand on his throat. Twice I had my hand on his throat. And I could not do it. I could not do it!"

It was hard to know whether it was a confession of sin, or a confession of failure. But Father Driscoll knew, for he said simply:

"As God made you, so you are, Jimmie. You could not do it. No. You could not."

CHAPTER XV

THE LONG ROAD

JOHN SARGENT was dying. Father Driscoll admitted it to himself as he bent over the cot, loosening the tight collar away from the swollen neck and doing what could be done to relieve the pressure on the brain and the faintly laboring heart.

It looked as though the spark of life would die out slowly into darkness, without even that momentary flash of consciousness which so often comes toward the very end. The Dean was praying, as he worked, that this would not be so.

He hated death. With all the warm human grip on life of a man who loves men and is loved by them, he hated death. For nearly half a century it had been a large part of his life to stand at bedsides and see the coming of death. And always he had fought death back. He hated death in the night and in the morning, in whatever form it came.

But that death should thus take a man away without a chance for a word, without a look back at life, without even a word of human kindliness to take with him on the way; this he resented.

John Sargent, you could say, was nothing to him. At the gate of the mill the Dean had found

two of his own people, badly wounded. John Sargent was to be blamed for that. Down in the casting-room he had given conditional absolution and Extreme Unction to the little half man, whole hero, who was now dead. John Sargent had done that. But he fought death back and prayed that John Sargent might have at least the pitiful little sacrament of a kind word to take with him into the dark.

Doctor Hamble came hurrying into the office. At sight of the old priest, the doctor's left eyebrow curved upward just an extra trifle. If there was any bedside at which a doctor would be less likely to meet a priest than at John Sargent's, he could not just now think whose it would be. But for thirty years now he had been meeting the Dean of Milton at bedsides where one would not have expected to meet a priest. So, he went swiftly about his work.

For twenty minutes he worked quickly, with the sure, vivid touch and movement of a man whose hands are made to play upon the pulses of life.

At the end of that time, he turned to read the speaking question in the Dean's face.

"No response," he said simply. "I thought I could force a rally. No vitality left," he explained. "An hour, perhaps," he pronounced. "He will not speak."

The two men stood looking down into the heavy, discolored face on the pillow.

A faint shiver ran through the inert body. A long, sighing breath came slowly from the lungs. John Sargent opened his eyes.

The doctor turned swiftly to the priest. "I would not have thought it," he said.

John Sargent's eyes roved vaguely over the two men and past them, refusing to come to focus. Then, as if at a click, the mind took its grip, the eyes slipped into line, and John Sargent, a conscious, clear-headed man, looked up, first at the priest, then at the doctor.

John Sargent had accomplished most of the things of his life by doing the unexpected. He was still keeping true to his habits.

For a little time he made no attempt to speak and seemed to pay little attention to the two men standing over him. His mind was working back and forth over the gap through which it had just come, snatching up the broken ends of things, so that he could see where he was—and why—and what next.

It took some time, but in the end he seemed to have found out all the things, or nearly all, that he needed to know. He made no attempt to move. He seemed to know that his time and his strength were severely limited. He did not intend to waste any of either.

"How long?" he asked the doctor bluntly.

The doctor put his forefinger lightly on the stiffening artery just near the hinge of the jaw.

"One hour," he answered simply. "I cannot promise—"

"Plenty," said Sargent quietly. Then: "You have done everything?"

The doctor nodded his head slowly.

"Then, I would like to talk to this—my friend here."

Again the doctor nodded and walked quietly to the door. If he had any wonder or any comment, he kept it strictly to himself.

"Where is Loyd?" John Sargent asked, as the door closed.

"Out through the mill," said the Dean, "clearing up things."

"Um. He did the trick at last. Wonder is that he didn't get around to it long ago. Still—still, he might have waited. I would have done it for him another way."

What was this? The Dean was not sure that Sargent's mind was entirely clear. But he said nothing, and set himself to catch every shade of meaning from the man's words.

"But—no." Sargent went on slowly and reflectively. "I suppose it had to come just the way it did.

"Did Loyd—do this to me?"

"Thank God! No." The Dean assured him. "Twice he lifted his hand. I saw it. But he could not—he could not harm you. God was before him."

"I'm glad," said Sargent quietly. "I've never been able to keep from liking that fellow. If—if—the One you speak of—had only given me a son like him! But—what's the use? I don't know. I don't know.

"He's got control of everything?" he asked abruptly.

"Everything."

"What will *you* do?"

So far, the Dean had not thought of what he might do. Now Sargent's matter-of-fact assumption that he was the one to do something brought the Dean face to face with his problem. What should he do? What could he do?

Jim Loyd was walking at large, in defiance of the power of the State. The Dean knew that most of the men of his congregation were organized in open rebellion against the law. They had tasted their own power. They had drunk the strong, maddening wine of successful lawlessness. They had seen their dead. They would not, could not, go back now. Before to-morrow night soldiers, thousands of them, would be on their way to Milton.

As his mind went leaping over the possibilities, the answer came in a flash. Without hesitation, he gave it as it came:

"I will get Governor Fuller to come here to-morrow morning, himself, alone."

Sargent took the answer and turned it over

rapidly, fitting it to every angle of the case. Shortly, he said:

"I was right. I always said you were the wisest and shrewdest man I ever knew.

"It will work," he continued. "Nothing else would. The men would fight five regiments. With the Governor, alone, they will talk. You are right."

He settled himself slightly on the pillow, as though he had settled something and was thereby relieved.

He lay for a while apparently sunk in deep thought. Then looking up sharply at the Dean, he said impressively:

"Tell the Governor—tell the Governor to leave Loyd alone until my will is read. Tell him, from me, to leave things just as they are—and keep his soldiers away—until my will is read.

"This is Wednesday," he began again. "I shall be buried on Friday—my secretary has all instructions—there is nobody else. They will read my will Friday afternoon. Until then, tell the Governor to hold his hands off and leave everything just as it is."

The Dean did not understand what was in Sargent's mind, but he answered promptly:

"He will do as you say."

"No," said Sargent with a flash of his old, grim manner, "he will not do as I say. But he will do what you advise."

"Then, I will vouch that he will do what you wish," said the Dean gravely.

Sargent was silent a moment. Then he said:

"I wish you would send Loyd to me. And that Gaylor girl, I want to see her, too. I want to see them both together."

The Dean knew that he was dismissed. But he was loath to go without having said his word of human kindness and understanding. He was saying good-bye to John Sargent forever, and it was not easy to find the right word.

Finally he said simply and easily:

"Mr. Sargent, you are going the long way to-night. I am an old man: I go that way presently. I would like to have a word of me go there ahead of me. What word will you carry concerning James Driscoll?"

Sargent looked gravely up into his face for a long time. He understood, better than the Dean had been able to put it into words, the man-to-man kindness, the forgiveness, the faith, which the old priest was trying to convey to him.

"If there is Anybody there to listen, I will say," he said, "that I knew one man who *believed in God.* It's about all I'd be able to say, I guess," he added in a queer, rueful manner.

"That was not what you wanted me to say, I know, Father," he said again. "I never *could* say it—the right thing. I can't now. Only: Thank you. And, good-bye."

His nerveless hand stirred a little, trying to

rise to the Dean's. The Dean took the hand in his own big, capable one, and gave the directions of the Road.

"The way is long, sir. But God Almighty is at the end of all. Believe me, He is there. If ever in all your life you knew man or woman whom you could trust with everything, with your all, then trust Him now. Keep your face to the light. And—God be good to you!" he said in simple reverence.

He went out to find Loyd. Before sending him to bring Nonie Gaylor, he told Loyd what he had promised Sargent—that the Governor should come to Milton the next day, and that nothing should be changed until Sargent's will could be read.

"He is a dying man, Jimmie. I believe he has tried to put things right. Maybe God is ready to show us a way out of all this. I do not know what Sargent means, but I pray, and hope, that it will turn out right. You will do your part, I know."

Loyd, shaken and nearly broken by the things through which he had gone, said thickly:

"Whatever you tell me, Dean. If you say the word, I'll—I'll walk back into jail!"

"No." The Dean was prompt and decided in his negative. "That would not do. It would not be safe. Just now, you are the law and the authority of this town. It is no time to let things slip. When the Governor comes, deal with him

direct. Now, call central and tell them to let me have the Albany wire for a half hour. Then bring Nonie Gaylor. Mr. Sargent wants to talk to both of you."

When he had gotten his message through to Albany, the Dean hurried back to the church to help with the Christmas Eve confessions.

Doctor Hamble, going back into the office, asked Sargent if he would care to be moved anywhere—to his own house, or to the hospital.

"No," said Sargent, "this is my house. I live here. I die here." Then, after a little pause: "You were not far wrong, Doctor—about the time. An hour is short, isn't it. Still, I've often done a lot of things in an hour.

"I have to see two people now. I hope they'll be along soon. I always hated to be cut short. I want to ask them some questions—certain information I must have, for use on my travels."

The doctor was not sure that Sargent was quite rational, but when Loyd and Nonie Gaylor came to the door he admitted them without protest. Knowing the things that had happened in Milton during the last three months, he acknowledged that John Sargent, in his hour, might well have some things to say to these two.

Nonie Gaylor went quietly, as a matter of course, to the head of the cot, and, kneeling lightly, began to smooth the pillow.

Sargent looked curiously at her for a moment.

Then he turned to Loyd, who stood helplessly looking down at him.

"Loyd," he said suddenly, "do you remember the day you told me I would die of fright, frightened to death?"

Loyd, unable to speak, nodded dumbly.

"You were wrong. I wasn't afraid to-night. And yet, you were right, too. I did get a fright once.

"I was in Dean Driscoll's house one night. He was talking to me. He was just telling me what Cain said to God when he was convicted of the murder of Abel.

"I've read that place a lot of times since. Do you remember what he said?"

Loyd stood silent, hardly hearing what was being said. Nonie Gaylor, instinct warning her of what was coming, was weeping quietly. Sargent looked at her an instant, and went on:

"He said, 'Every man's hand against me—every man that finds me will kill me.' Just then I heard a shot. It was the shot that killed Harry Loyd."

A low, stifled sob broke through Nonie Gaylor's lips.

Sargent stopped, listened, then took up his story again:

"I went down the street. The news was just coming up the street, that young Loyd had been killed. But that was not what I heard. All

that I could hear was the cry that Cain heard everywhere. It was the cry, the whine coming up the street from the throats of a thousand men. The cry, it seemed, of all the men in the world—in full pack—whining to kill, to kill, to kill me, with their hands, with their hands!

"I ran. I ran to Benson. That was twelve miles. I ran all the way. It was that run that caught my heart to-night as you came up those stairs. I knew it. So you were right, too.

"I was—I am frightened to death."

He stopped, seeming to lose his hold upon things. But he caught himself and spoke briskly again.

"Now, I didn't bring you two here to show you a lesson of poetic justice. That was just a way things seem to have of happening in this world.

"I just wanted to ask you both a question or two. It was something that I needed to know before I go—where I am going.

"Jim Loyd," he said, speaking loudly and clearly, "I took your brother's life, indirectly, of course. At least I was the cause. I tried to ruin your life. Finally I sent you on your way to prison. Now, the question: What do you feel toward me? Is it a foolish question? No. It is not. I need to know the answer. Where I am going—I have to know."

Loyd was stunned. His first thought, that Sargent was delirious, was driven away by the imperious, calm assertion of the man's need. He

had to know. He *must* know. There was no escaping the question that burned in the man's eyes. Loyd did his best. Nothing but the naked truth would serve those eyes.

"Three different times," he said simply, "I tried to kill you—tried to make my hands kill you. But, as God forgives me! if I could save you from pain now, or where you go, I'd give my hand to do it."

The burning eyes searched his face for a moment and, convinced, turned away.

"Nonie Gaylor," he demanded, "what do you say? They say a woman never forgives. I took love and the best of life from you. Do you dare say that you forgive?"

"God gave me my love," she answered steadily, "and God took my love away from my sight. If I could smooth your way—where you are going—I would do it at any, any cost."

John Sargent heard her crying softly.

He lay quiet, reflecting on this thing. They told the truth, these two. He had wronged them both, irreparably. And they were ready to give him back kindness, even sacrifice.

Now, why? Ah! That was the other question. He had almost forgotten to ask it. Strange that he should have come so near forgetting it. For it was the really important question.

Yes, that was the question—why?

He must ask it quickly. He must have the

answer. All would be clear if he could but have that answer.

He must rouse himself. He must raise his head and put that question clearly!

Nonie Gaylor saw the struggle coming. She slipped her arm under the pillow, so that his head was raised a little.

Twice his lips formed the word, and no sound came. The third time he spoke it strong and clear:

"Why?"

Nonie Gaylor answered softly at his ear:

"Because God and love is all there is in the world!"

Apparently, John Sargent heard. He eased back gently on the pillow—dead.

Loyd fell quickly to his knees. And these two, whom John Sargent had once wondered at for praying, prayed now, for him.

After a little, Loyd rose and went to the door.

Nonie Gaylor rose and put a little handkerchief over the face on the pillow. Then she crossed softly over to the window. The snow was falling gently in great, leafy flakes. Already the hills were white.

It would not be a green Christmas, after all.

John Sargent was a thing of the past. The heavy snow that had begun falling just as he was setting out upon the "long road" was already

drifting above his body. Of him there remained, above ground, three things: His mill which lay stretched idle and waiting between the river and the River Road, guarded by Jim Loyd's men; his will which lay now upon a broad oak table in the library of his big, neglected Milton home; his son who was somewhere in Europe.

A great lawyer had come this morning from New York, to attend the funeral of John Sargent and to bring the will. With the will, he had brought a memorandum of instructions in which John Sargent had named the various persons who should be present at the reading of the will.

These persons named were now seated in the old library, waiting for the lawyer to begin. They were:

Dean Driscoll, Nathan Oppenheim, George Lowther, secretary and sales manager of the Milton Machinery Company, James Loyd, John Strekno, William Flinn, Norah Gaylor. With them sat the Governor of the State, Gordon Fuller.

Yesterday, Christmas, the Governor had stepped off the eleven o'clock train from Albany and walked quietly up through Milton. What he saw was a town so quiet that it seemed to have been hushed by some strong will brooding over it. Not a single uniformed policeman was to be seen. Two or three sturdy men walked quietly back and forth on each block of State Street.

With the exception of these, there were hardly any men to be seen. The women who were abroad went swiftly about their errands.

Just ahead of the Governor, two men stopped on the sidewalk to argue about something. The Governor stood beside them, to hear what it was about. One of the patrolling men stepped up to the three and, touching the Governor lightly on the arm, curtly ordered the three to move on. They did so.

"What did that mean?" the Governor asked one of the two men, when all three had gone a little way.

"When did you get into town?" the man returned. Then, seeing that the Governor did not really know what it was all about, the man explained:

"Loyd's orders."

The Governor walked on by himself.

Loyd's orders!—he said to himself—they seemed to think that that explained everything! I think I ought to know this man Loyd. I might learn something from him. Any man that can stand a town up on end like this, is worth knowing. He's a *governor!* Not one of the paper and tape kind, like me.

Without asking any further questions, he made his way up through the town to Dean Driscoll's house.

Rapidly and clearly the Dean showed him the situation. He was confronted with an open re-

volt against the authority of the State, vested in his own person.

Then the Dean laid before him Sargent's request, that all things remain as they were until his will had been read.

"I will see Loyd first," said the Governor. "Will he come here?"

Loyd came.

The Governor threatened him with the armed forces of the whole State. Loyd replied that he had expected all that from the beginning. The Governor offered him a pardon for his own crime, if he would go back to jail and drop the business which he had undertaken. Loyd answered that he had tried his own case and had found himself not guilty. Therefore there was no need of pardon.

The Governor thought a while.

"We will listen to the dead man," he said finally.

Now they were listening to the dead man. Before coming to the will, the great lawyer picked up from the table a smaller paper. From it he read a sworn and witnessed statement by the late John Sargent, setting forth that he, John Sargent, had given the order, by telephone from the village of Benson, for the explosion which wrecked the stock house of the Milton Machinery plant on the morning of September fifth.

This was the crime of which Jim Loyd had been convicted.

The eyes of the room turned to Loyd. But Loyd was not thinking of the change which this statement made in his position. He was thinking of John Sargent. The other night, when he was dying, John Sargent knew that he had done this act of justice. But, he had chosen to go off surlily, into the dark, leaving Loyd to think the worst of him. Why had he not spoken then? Well, Sargent had always been that way.

He had always kept his worst side out.

There was a general stir in the room. The Governor rose and came over to take Loyd's hand.

"I am very glad it has come out this way, Loyd," said the Governor. "I was convinced that you were innocent, from the moment he told me of the thing that day in my office. I would have given you a pardon the moment you were sentenced. It was a bad business."

"Mr. Sargent was not to blame," said Loyd, looking the Governor levelly in the eyes.

The Governor did not understand.

"Mr. Sargent," Loyd went on, "found a system and used it. That was all. He did not make the system. He was a part of it, himself. The system, the conditions of things, the State, the people of the State, the officials of the State: They are all to blame. The trouble is not that men *do* those things, the trouble is that they *can* do those things."

It was not altogether a pleasant return of the

Governor's well-meant heartiness, but the Governor met it frankly.

"Yes," he said, "we are all to blame. We all admit carelessness and indifference and social injustice. But," he added, "we are not all able to lead armies, to right the wrongs."

The lawyer was now going on with the will.

After the preamble, the will disposed of small individual bequests to old servants and dependents. There was a thoroughgoing completeness about the way in which John Sargent arranged these; giving what was enough to each, and nothing more than enough, for prudent, frugal living, that showed that John Sargent had considered each individual separately and with studied care.

Then there were certain charities, favorites of his mother, to which John Sargent had regularly contributed for years. To these various causes he had left sums governed in amount, not by their need or their comparative usefulness or effectiveness for good. He had dealt with them solely on the basis of the estimation which his mother had held of them many years ago. To himself, or as channels of help to the world's needy and suffering, those charities had never meant anything. He had always found the scrap heap so near and such a good investment, that he believed it a waste of the world's good time and energy to try to save the weak things or the useless things.

Concerning Milton Sargent, the son of John Sargent, the will explained that a certain sum

tion to hold and manage the stock herein bequeathed to the described beneficiaries. They will be in actual possession of nine-tenths of all the shares of the Milton Machinery Company. It will therefore be incumbent upon the said trustees, as representing the majority stockholders, to choose and appoint the officers of the Milton Machinery Company and to govern the affairs of that company.

"I likewise devise that each and every employee, other than those specified above, shall, when he or she shall have completed five years continuous employment with said company, become automatically a participant in the benefits of this instrument and a co-owner of the shares before named. (The months during the Summer and Fall of the present year, when all work was suspended in Milton shall be reckoned as employment.)

"The shares shall be apportioned and owned by the employees and the profits therefrom divided in a scale mathematically based upon the comparative wages earned by the employees.

"I hereby name and request Nathan Oppenheim and the Reverend James Driscoll hereinbefore mentioned to act as executors of this, my last will and testament."

This was the end of the will proper. But John Sargent had more to say. Beneath his signature and that of the witnesses, he had appended his own statement in his own way. It

had already been set aside, invested in bonds that could not fail to give their stated returns, for his support during life. This arrangement had already been perfected. Properly it had nothing to do with this present document.

But John Sargent had desired to leave a statement of this case. He had not cut his son off from participation in the body of his estate through any bitterness or malice. There was no word of blame for the son. John Sargent stated simply that he did not judge his son competent to handle the large responsibility of money and power. It would not conduce to his son's welfare or happiness. There was no complaint. John Sargent stated a bald fact. And in that simple statement he disposed of the bitter disappointment of his life.

Then came the main clause of the will.

"My estate,"—it is better to quote—"consisting of twenty-two thousand shares of the Milton Machinery Company's stock, I leave in trust to all and several employees of the Milton Machinery Company who were continuously in the employ of said company during the five years next previous to the third day of May of this calendar year. I direct and hereby name Nathan Oppenheim of New York, Reverend James Driscoll, George Lowther, John Strekno, William Flinn, James Loyd, Norah Gaylor, all of Milton, to be and act as trustees for the herein described beneficiaries. The said trustees shall form a corpora-

tion to hold and manage the stock herein bequeathed to the described beneficiaries. They will be in actual possession of nine-tenths of all the shares of the Milton Machinery Company. It will therefore be incumbent upon the said trustees, as representing the majority stockholders, to choose and appoint the officers of the Milton Machinery Company and to govern the affairs of that company.

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This was the end of the will proper. But John Sargent had more to say. Beneath his signature and that of the witnesses, he had appended his own statement in his own way. It

was evident that while forming the main portion of the will he had been hampered by the stunting phraseology of the lawyer.

Now he was free to tell the world just what he thought. Probably he did not remember just how little the world cared about what he thought and said, or why. Perhaps he did not care. It was his word. It was John Sargent, as he had lived and thought, and as he expected to die.

"I am not a philanthropist," he had written. "I am not a repentant pirate of industry, trying to snivel into the good memory of men. I have no idea that what I have just done will accomplish any real good either for the world or for those who receive benefits from my will.

"I have not space here to enumerate all the reasons which prompted me to doing what I have done. No man is ever sure just why he does any particular thing.

"Three months ago I would have said, and believed, that a man who did a thing such as I have done, would, in effect, be an enemy to society. I would have said: The man had a fortune; a fortune is a sacred thing. A fortune is a thing that by its very nature is bound to make another fortune. It is bound to go on adding to the wealth of the world by adding to itself. Men who have money are bound to go on making more money and keeping it together, for only by these men making money and keeping it together is the wealth and prosperity of the world increased.

"Men who have money and the ability to make money—I said—are in a class by themselves. They have upon them the burden of making this world rich and keeping it rich. And this is a task that is every day getting harder and harder. The unfit, the unready, the unwilling are every day increasing out of all proportion. They are not content to eat the share of the world's wealth day by day, as it is provided for them. No. They want to come into the storehouse and eat up in one gorge what it has taken years to gather.

"Men of wealth, men with the ability to make and store up, must stand together. Wealth must stand by wealth. We must keep back the crowd from the storehouse. Otherwise they will come in and glut themselves in one meal—and then the world will starve to death. We are the guardians, the keepers, the makers and the keepers. We have a duty to the world and to each other, we men of wealth. We must go on producing, producing so that the world may eat. We must go on keeping, keeping so that we will have the power to go on producing. If we do not produce, the world starves. If we do not keep, we cannot go on producing more—the more that is always being demanded.

"We must stand and fight against the gluttony of the world. If allowed to, it would eat in a day all that we can produce in a year. Social unrest, the ever-whetted appetite of the

many, wanting to eat more than there is for them to eat, is crowding us harder and harder. We must stand back to back, shoulder to shoulder, or we shall be pulled down.

"Think of it!" The lawyer unconsciously fell into the tones of the dead man with whom he had long been intimate. The effect was uncanny. The lawyer himself felt it, and changed his voice carefully as he began again.

"Think of it! For all the years of my manhood, thirty years and more, I believed that! I was a fool, of course. But I believed it. I believed that every rich man belonged to a class of rich men. I believed that they were loyal to each other and to their class. I was proud to be of the class. I believed that we all stood together, especially in this country, to hold back the oncoming rush of Socialism and Anarchy and the short-sighted greed of the non-producing many.

"Then I got my lesson.

"I was in trouble. My employees had fought me to a standstill. I saw ruin. On top of that came the Governor of the State, sworn to protect me while I produced wealth for the State; he came and pushed me out of my own mill. I was helpless. I needed help. I went to those who could and, of course, would help me—to my fellow rich men. What did they do?

"They tried to throw me out to the pack!

"I am putting my fortune back where, some say, it originally came from. They say it came

from the hands of those who have worked for me. They lie. My fortune came out of my father's brain and mine.

"And, why?

"I am doing this, not because I feel I ought to do it, not because it will do good, but because it will be an everlasting scare and nightmare to all rich men.

"I have found that there is no such thing as class responsibility or loyalty among rich men. But by this I will teach all rich men that it would not be difficult to put an end to them all. Wherever two of them talk together, they will revile John Sargent because he showed Socialism how, and how easily, it might be done.

"But I am not doing this for Socialism. It will not advance the cause of that goose-killing fraud.

"For years I have heard that the profits of my mill were not divided. They were not divided. They were kept together. And they were put back into the mill—to make it produce more and more, that the people might eat, and go on eating.

"The profits will not be divided now. There will be no profits. Those profits were sweated out of my own brain and energy.

"Finally. If any of those to whom I am giving my fortune say that it was theirs by right, that I took it from their work and kept it from them all these years; then, I challenge them.

"Let them show twenty years from now how many of them have anything of what I have given them!

"Twenty years ago, they had nothing. Twenty years from now, most of them will have nothing.

"I am going now to Milton, to make my last fight, alone.

"If I beat all my enemies completely, absolutely; then I shall come back here and burn this. If I die before I beat them all, then this shall stand as it is written."

As the lawyer finished reading, the party rose. Bewilderment was the only feeling that was written on their faces with any clearness. When a man who does not understand himself, and who, in addition to that, deliberately puts the worst side out, tries to reveal himself, the result is bound to be confusing.

The Governor asked the great lawyer:

"Is that will sound?"

"As sound as human, and legal, foresight can make anything. I should say it is absolutely unassailable," was the answer.

"What can be done here, in the meantime, before it can go into effect, I mean?"

"The court can appoint the executors to hold the property. That's the simplest way."

CHAPTER XVI

THE HEART OF A MAN

It was New Year's Day on the hills. A biting, freezing wind came sweeping down from Orrin Mountain, down across the lesser uplands, cleansing all things. It brushed the light snow from the brows of the hillocks, leaving them bare and bald, and carried it down on its breath, a biting, bitter-sweet breath, to the valley.

A clear day, a cold day, a day when earth was as clean as heaven; a day white and bright lay like a new page for the New Year to begin upon.

It was a day to set forth illimitable promise. All things might be done. All things were new. All dead things were buried, covered; a clean, sweet, new sheet was spread over all.

Now let all men begin anew! A new life, a new heart, a new hope!

The diamond-dust snow-crystals in the air bit into the nostrils and the throat. The breath of the wind was death to everything that was unsound or unwholesome. But to healthy things it was life. It was spirit. It was courage and vigor. To the body, it was stamina and blood and strength. To the soul, it was a restless, ir-

repressible prompting for growth, for a bigger, better life; indeed, for a New Year.

Nonie Gaylor was alone on the hill in the Catholic cemetery. She was half kneeling beside a little evergreen, carefully trimming off the rusted branches, so that it might be all fresh and green and glad to the New Year.

She was talking to Harry Loyd. She was sure that—where Harry was—he knew all about things. But then, how could he know all about things, just as they were, unless he heard them from her? There were so many things, and little meanings of things, that he could not possibly get right except from her.

His grave lay just at the foot of the little evergreen bush. But she was not thinking so much of the grave. She was able to shut her eyes and just feel that Harry was near and listening. She told all her little things to the evergreen as she worked lovingly among its branches.

Harry had to know all the things that had been happening in Milton. How John Sargent had arranged his Christmas presents. How Harry's brother, big, fierce, dour Jim Loyd, had taken Milton and all in it by the throat. How he had tried, tried with his hands, to kill John Sargent; and how God would not let him. And then how Jim Loyd and herself had knelt beside John Sargent and sent him away to God with a message for forgiveness. How they had all stood on the brink of terror, and chance had come

staggering along on the arm of destiny and had changed everything. How the New Year, the new time, the new hope, had come for all of them.

Harry would want to know, from her, about it all. Now she could tell him how much his going had had to do with everything. She had not understood that before. And she had been very near to blaming God. Now she knew better. John Sargent had let her see how it had all worked out from that night when she had given Harry a good-night kiss and sent him whistling down the road with a prayer breathed after him. Now she could tell him how it had not been all in vain.

How blythe and brave her Harry had been that night, when they had found that they must wait a long time for each other. And she had been heart-sick and a little rebellious, because they had to help others and wait for their own happiness. How gaily he had said, "You're worth waiting for, Nonie: And old John W. Wait has nothing on me."

She fondled the boy's airy words over on her lips, as she had done many times; and as she would do so many, many times in the long roll of the years to come. And then when she had told him everything, even down to the last word that John Sargent had growled at the world in his will, she prepared to go. Giving the little evergreen a final pat she said, half aloud:

"We'd have had to wait, anyway. Now we'll

have to wait a little longer. You don't mind the waiting, do you? And I—it won't seem so long. Tell me, Dear Heart, that it won't seem so very long."

But the evergreen only shivered a little in the North wind.

From the River Road a private road turned off and ran in between the two cemeteries. On the other side of it, stretching away up the far hillside, lay the general cemetery of Milton.

As Nonie Gaylor stood up, a man was coming up the private road. He was a big man with a dark head and enormous, wide-spanning shoulders, who walked slowly with his eyes down upon the road beneath him.

It was Jim Loyd. She wondered. It was not like him to be coming up here on a day like this, or on any day. She supposed, of course, that he was coming here, for the road led nowhere else.

But when he had come almost opposite her in the road, he turned, and, climbing the stile on the other side of the road, went into the other cemetery.

In a moment she saw where he was going. Across the road, almost opposite to where her Harry lay, there stood an enormous, rough-cut, stark boulder of dark granite. Old Milton Sargent had seen it cut out of the heart of the hills. His bones had now lain under it for many years.

Beside it was a new grave, showing up raw and brown through the drifting snow.

At the foot of the new grave Jim Loyd stopped and stood there, baring his black head to the North wind.

Nonie Gaylor watched him. He had not seen her, but she did not feel that she was spying upon him. She watched him frankly, and as she watched she saw the lines of his face and his great, rough figure soften, as though a galling burden of years had suddenly been lifted from him. And she understood. Through a rush of choking tears, she half smiled—a pale, sorrow-bitten little smile, nevertheless, a smile, of understanding and mothering sympathy. Big Jim Loyd was as foolish as she—coming to say things to the voiceless dead!

How far away now seems that time when she had feared this big man with his burning eyes and his grim, clamped jaw!

Now she began to understand how it was that he could come and talk to John Sargent. There had always been a sort of rough likeness between the two men. She saw it now: The same dark ruthlessness in the looks of both: The same unblinking way of fixing their eyes upon the thing they wanted, and going forward to take that thing, no matter what the cost: The same hard, contemptuous scorn of the ways and opinions of lesser men. Brothers in the mold they had been.

She wondered if the leaders of men had always to have those same tyrannical, hard-driving ways. Were those the only ways in which men could be ruled and handled?

And what a fight these two men would have shown to the world if they had been put into it with equal weapons. They would have split the world between them. But, no, she remembered. They would not do that. They would not have divided anything, those two. They would have fought until one had killed the other and had taken all.

But, if they had been friends, standing together in some great cause!

Or, if they had been father and son!

Then she remembered that John Sargent had a son. Would idleness and money and the lure of life have done the same things to Jim Loyd—had he been born to them—that they had done to the actual son of John Sargent?

Or would Jim Loyd, supposing that he had been educated and trained to take John Sargent's place in the world, have developed the same grasping, self-centered hunger for wealth and power that had made John Sargent what he was? She did not know.

How strange it was that the world should have so many jagged edges that would not fit together in any place. Just as you had one little part nicely arranged, you suddenly found that the whole thing was wrong everywhere else.

Loyd lifted his head and, turning, saw her. He came out to the road and crossed over to where she was.

"Happy New Year, Nonie!" he said in a strange, quiet voice.

"I hope so, Jim; for us all," she returned thoughtfully. "I've just been telling Harry all about everything." She had not the slightest fear that he would wonder at her or fail to understand.

Loyd stood uncovered beside the tree that she had trimmed and gazed at the whitened grave beneath it.

"It had to be so, I guess," he said, turning to her. "I suppose there was no other way. It had to be just so."

The Jim Loyd who spoke was a man different, irrevocably different from the man that she had known. His eyes were still steady. His head was held as high as ever. He looked, perhaps, stronger than ever. But it was a look of tried and chastened strength, a strength that knew that, after all, there was something that could curb it, something that could conquer it in the end. It was a strength—the greatest of all strength—that bowed itself to the hand of God.

Unconsciously he had taken the thought against which she had been rebelling a little—she could not see why God could not have arranged a world in which there were fewer jagged edges—and he had accepted it without question. The

Jim Loyd of old had never accepted anything without question.

"It's all a challenge to us, Nonie," he said, after they had taken their silent leave of the dead. "He challenged us, and all the world will challenge us, to make it a better New Year, to do better than he did."

"Can we do it, Jim?" she asked, as they came out into the road and started for home. "I know that I can do a great deal for the women. I am sure that I can save a lot of the hardship. But can we do it? It will take money. And was he right, when he said that there would be no profits? Can that be so?"

"No." Loyd spoke simply, with the assurance of one who has studied and who knows his ground. "He was wrong in that. At first the profits will not be as big as he has sometimes made. We have to look for that. We'll have to spend a lot of money, changing things. And we'll have all the big interests against us from the start. They'll spend money like water to down us. Because Mr. Sargent did just what he thought he would do. He threw an everlasting scare into all the big men who are making money out of labor. They will never forgive him. And they'll never let up on us.

"All the big iron and steel men are swearing agreements among themselves this minute not to sell us materials. But it's just as he said. Rich men can't hold together long. Their

money, and the fear that they'll lose money won't let them. Some one of them will always sneak out of the agreement and sell to us. And he won't do it for the sake of the money either, that's the funny part of it. He'll do it because he's afraid some sworn brother of his may beat him to it."

"And are we all Socialists now, Jim?" the girl asked. "Somebody said we were."

"Socialists?" Loyd looked down at her, as though the word were new to him. "Nobody's a Socialist when he's got what he wants."

The girl recognized the old Loyd in the words.

"No. That ain't right, either." He caught himself up sharply, and Nonie Gaylor remembered that she had never before heard this man correct himself. "That ain't fair: Socialism ain't all just an appetite and nothing else.

"But—" He started to make it clear, but found that he did not have the words.

"I don't know," he began again. "But I think it's this way:

"Everybody in the world is a Socialist, if you'd let him have his own brand of it."

They had come now to the River Road, and both instinctively turned back to look up the hill.

It was Loyd who spoke:

"It all had to be—had to be, I suppose. But I don't know. I'd—I'd like to able to wish away some of it."

And she knew some of the things which had

been done had left a mark on Jim Loyd which he would carry forever.

She turned quietly toward home, saying:

"Our business now is to live and work: The rest is already in God's hands. He will look to it."

They went down the River Road, to begin the New Year, the new time of life, and work, and service for men and women.

"You're a very busy man, I'll not stop to-day, I'm on my way to the train now," said Father Lynch, as he poked his head unannounced into the Dean's study where the latter sat writing a letter. The Dean rose and hurried to place the favored chair for his friend.

Because Father Lynch had come for what he knew would be an uncommonly interesting session of the monthly court which he held over the Dean and the Dean's doings—from which horses could not have dragged him away, it took an unusual amount of insistence, and some physical force, to get him relieved of his coat and seated. Even then, he continued to protest that—from all he heard—the Dean was too busy, too deeply engrossed in large affairs, to be interrupted.

Finally, however, he settled down and opened his court. Without preface he made his charge.

"So you have gone over to the tents of Israel!" he said, eyeing the Dean sternly.

"A man like you," he continued, giving the

Dean no time to answer, "that could never keep two dollars of your own together, going into dealings at your time o' life with a—a Jew!"

"Oh," said the Dean, catching the drift of the argument, "you mean the business of Mr. Sargent's will. Well, you see, Father Patrick, there isn't much for the executors to do. Mr. Sargent provided for everything so thoroughly that our work is purely mechanical.

"Seriously, though," the Dean went on to explain, "the selection of Mr. Oppenheim showed remarkable foresight and insight on the part of Mr. Sargent. Mr. Oppenheim is a man of great wealth, with his fortune so placed that he is, so far as is possible, independent of all the combinations of great interests. There is no wiser or shrewder man in all America. And he is a Hebrew. This last means that he is of a race of people in whom respect for the wishes of the dead is one of their most indelible traits. No people in the world, perhaps, is so faithful to obligations placed upon it by death than is the Hebrew race.

"As you know, Father, John Sargent's fortune, the Milton Machinery Company, was not merely a manufacturing plant. It was a great financial institution, with its own banks and its trolley franchises and its real estate here. The financing of such an institution, with the enormous credits that it must carry, requires the highest order of money genius. Without the strength and counsel of such a man as Oppen-

heim we should be helpless. By securing a man such as Oppenheim—and securing him by an inviolable and sacred obligation—Mr. Sargent has left us in a position where we need fear nothing. To me, it is the very strongest proof that John Sargent, in spite of all, really meant to do a great and lasting thing with his money."

"Dean," said Father Lynch accusingly, "I am not being told the facts! It is inconsistent; all of it!" He had the air of a judge the dignity of whose court is being trifled with.

"John Sargent wrote that will three months ago," he reviewed severely. "He came back here and took back his mill from the Governor on the strength of a promise that he made to the Governor. He intended to break that promise. He began to run his mill like a fiend. You'd think his main object was to crush and maim as many men as he could. All this I have on your word.

"He used the machinery of the county to drive an innocent man to State's prison. He had you held up and pilloried in open court before the country. On Christmas Eve, itself, he turned out his old hands that had made his fortune, men and women, to starve through the winter. With his own hand he killed the little man.

"And all that time there was lying in his desk this will. A will that puts your Jim Loyd in a place of honor—his particular enemy! He gives his fortune to the people he was trying to

kill and starve. He leaves you, another enemy, in the place of nearest friend.

"Do you expect any sane man to believe all this! It's out of all reason, I tell you, Dean. No man, no madman, could be so inconsistent! You have not told me all," he charged flatly.

The Dean was silent for a moment. What was there to say? Father Lynch was in the right. Nothing could explain the contradiction between the things that John Sargent had done in those last months, and the will which had all that time lain in his desk. He himself had known the man. He had stood beside him and talked with him when he was dying, but he was as far from understanding as Father Lynch could be.

Finally he said gravely:

"You are right, Father Patrick, there is one thing that you were not shown: One thing that could not be brought into court. Without that, all the rest is wrong and contradictory and unbelievable. It is, the heart of the man.

"He took that with him—to show it to Almighty God. He trusted no man to see it."

This was ground on which Father Lynch had no jurisdiction over the Dean. They had come to the confines of the Kingdom of God, wherein, Father Lynch had always said, the Dean's proper parish lay.

The two friends sat a while in silence. Years

of unbroken, unstrained friendship lay back of them and between them. Their understandings went beyond the range of clumsy words.

"I do not understand," said the Dean, breaking the pause. "The heart of a man is a wonderful and many folded thing. There are places in it that the man himself has never explored, that he knows nothing about. The things that a man is saying or doing or thinking, even, have little to do with what is or may be in his heart.

"I only know this: John Sargent saw everywhere 'Every man's hand against him.' His men fought him. The Governor was against him. His own friends tried to ruin him. He struck out, viciously, madly, at every one that fought him. He was set upon bringing his enemies to their knees. He wanted to kill or crush them all. He fought as a man fights who has no hope in this life or in another—if you and I can understand what such a man feels. He fought on, without mercy and without reason.

"It may be that his will and the statement that went with it told the whole story. It may be that, of all his enemies—as he conceived them—he hated most the rich friends who betrayed him. It may be, as he said, that he gave his fortune to his workmen merely to put into their hands a weapon against all rich men. It may be that he simply wished to make his men carry on his own undying grudge against the men of his own class.

He seemed to think that this was his reason. Probably it was, as far as he knew his own heart. But this was not all. No, I am certain that there was more.

"He was fighting for his life, we have to remember that. You and I know nothing about what that means to a man like him. There is nothing on this earth that could mean to us what money and power and success meant to him. We have no way to measure the things that he did and felt.

"If he had been able to beat all his enemies in his own way, he would not have done what he did.

"If he had been granted a son after his own kind, he would not have done what he did.

"If he stopped to think of reasons, these are some of the reasons.

"But, beneath all these things, I believe John Sargent was in his heart a workingman. He thought he belonged to the class of rich men, the natural masters of men. He did not. He loved work done by the hands of men. He understood men who worked with their hands. In the blood, he was brother to them. He knew what they thought and felt. Near the end—even while his mind and his body were fighting them, his heart went back to them. He knew their thoughts and their longing for a chance at better things. In the end his heart wanted to give them that

chance, even though his mind told him that it would do them no good, and even though his will fought against it.

"Circumstances, accidents, what you may call it, left the victory to his heart. He gave the men their chance.

"You see, Father Patrick, I am a very wise man," the Dean concluded.

"Are you?" Father Lynch asked, with such a face of wooden gravity that the Dean burst out laughing.

"I am," he said, recovering himself. "I have given you good and wise reason on a thing that neither I nor any other man knows anything about—the heart of a man. No wise man could do more.

"But, when I have expounded to the full, there is still this to be said: I have seen little children holding up their hands to God for John Sargent!

"When we have said all our wise saws over the matter, we may well come back to that. I believe those little ones had their way. For their sakes, God did put one great and good thing into the heart of John Sargent. This I believe."

"Amen!" Father Lynch agreed firmly.

After a little he questioned shrewdly:

"Will it work, Dean? I see the papers all saying that it is impossible, that you cannot run a year, that you will run into debt, that you cannot find markets, that you cannot get the work

out of the men as Sargent did. Will it work?"

"It will," the Dean answered stoutly. "John Sargent was a strong and successful man. But there was never a time when he could not have hired a president to do all for his company that he did.

"Give Loyd one year, and, with the help that he has from Strekno and Flinn and Nonie Gaylor, he will do more with that mill than John Sargent could ever do.

"The papers are wrong. This is no amateur experiment. The mill will be run with as strong a hand as ever was held over it. But it will be the hand of the men themselves. Trust them. They will show you wonders."

"This Loyd is your Socialist?" Father Lynch inquired.

"He said he was a Socialist," the Dean admitted.

"And what does he say now?"

"He is not much of a talker," said the Dean slowly. "He is a man whose heart has passed through a riot of pride and fire and suffering, which he thought was the end of the world, and he has come out on the other side, only to find God standing there with His finger on it all.

"Jim Loyd was never a Socialist, in the sense we mean. He could not be.

"To-day he is simply a great man, with a world of suffering behind him, with the traces of it upon him; and with a power of good before him.

"Maybe it took something of Socialism to help make him what he is. But it took more, a great deal more, of lasting, deep faith in God to bring him through it all."

"Will you tell me, Dean: What is this Socialism?"

"Father Huetter will tell you," said the Dean craftily.

Father Huetter stood in the doorway.

"So, you've come to it, Father Lynch! Well, you're the last man we might have expected. But they all do. It's in the air. You couldn't escape it."

"I don't feel it yet," said Father Lynch; "but I might, if you'd tell me what you're talking about."

"Socialism," said Father Huetter unabashed. "You were just asking about it. Everybody is asking about it. Everybody wants to know what it is."

"Why don't they read the books? You told me to do that once. I read a basketful of them last week. A few of them had some wise old conundrums that I used to hear my grandfather conning over to himself, back in Sixty-eight when the potatoes were bad. The rest was bosh."

"It isn't the kind that's in the books, Father Lynch. It's the kind that's in the air. The kind that goes from one man's heart to another man's heart. It's the kind of Socialism that makes one man see the burden pressing into the

other man's back: It's the kind that makes a man start and turn red when he sees a child coughing in a factory: The kind that makes a man want to fight and work for a better world to live in: The kind that wants to make the world sweeter and kinder, and fitter for Christ!"

"Dean," said Father Lynch, "this young man has gotten hold of a part of the Sermon on the Mount, and he thinks it's Socialism."

But Father Huetter swept on:

"John Sargent did not know what he was doing! He did not know why he was doing it! He did it because he could not help it!

"There is a spirit stirring in this great land. It is a spirit of helpfulness and understanding. It is whispering to high and low a message which says that hopeless, helpless misery and suffering do not belong in this world.

"The power of that message does not lie in laws that may be written. It does not lie in constitutions that may be framed. It lies in the thousands, the millions of hearts that are echoing it. The cry of those hearts came to John Sargent when he knew it not. It made him do that which he would not.

"It is the cry of the broken man: It is the cry of the heart-sick woman: It is the cry of the hungry child: It is the cry of the unborn: All crying to be let live and love!

"And they *will* be heard!

"Socialism? This *is* Socialism: The old, old

Socialism: *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*
"Likewise: It is Faith."

THE END

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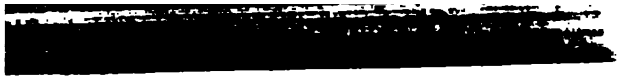
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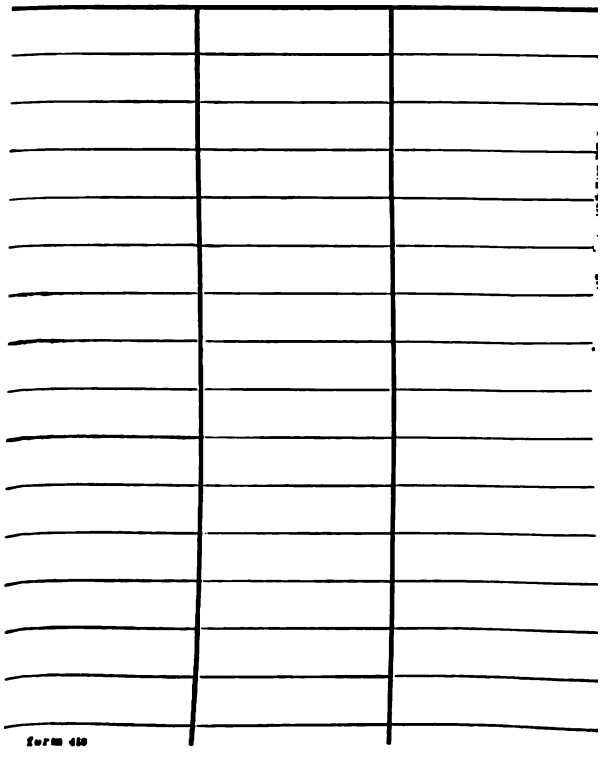
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